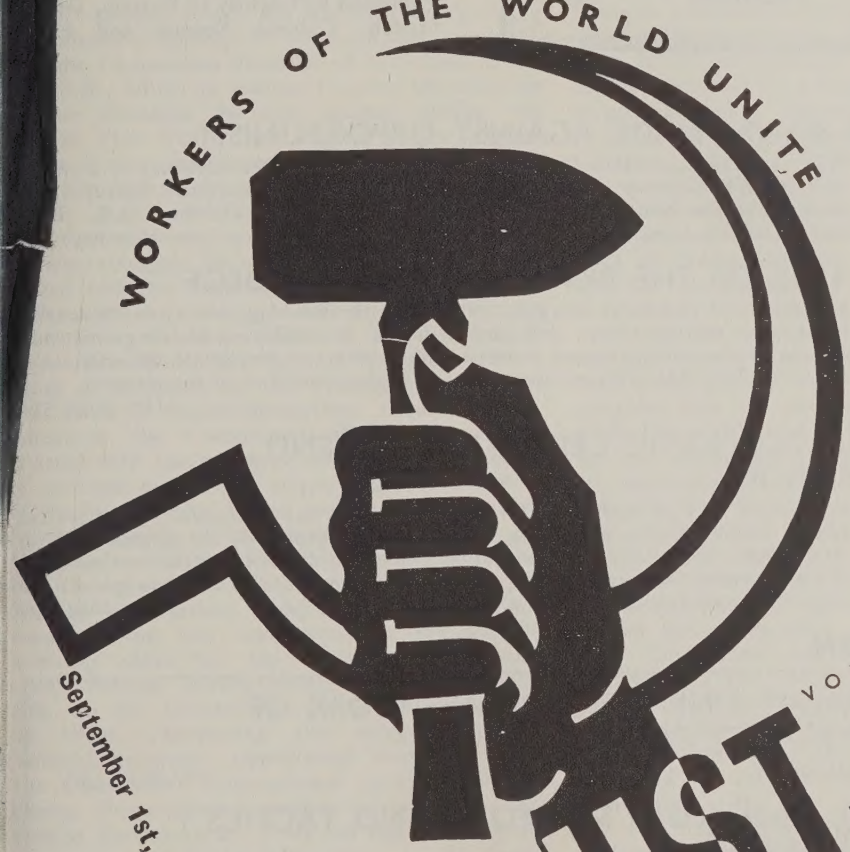
THE WORLD ECONOMIC CRISIS
THE VET'S IN U.S.A

See within



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BOLSHEVIST CANNONADE AGAINST OPPORTUNISM

THE end of capitalist stabilisation, arising out of the three years development of the world economic crisis, the stormy growth of the revolutionary upsurge in the capitalist countries, and the tremendous victories of Socialism in the U.S.S.R., which is moving towards the building of the classless Socialist society during the second Five Year Plan, marks a new *higher* stage in the development of the revolutionary class struggle of the proletariat. This new stage causes the Social-Democracy to resort to new "left" manœuvres, and thus places the question of the struggle between the Communist vanguard and the Social-Democracy for the proletarian masses (a struggle which has been waged ever since the foundation of the Communist International) in a new light. Throughout the 13 years of existence of the Comintern, whenever the crisis of Social-Democracy became acute, whenever the Communist Parties were confronted with the necessity of a change in tactics to conform to the new stage in the development of the international labour movement, there came forward agents of the bourgeoisie within the Communist Parties, for the purpose of retarding the growth of the revolutionary struggle. Instead of further progress, speedy adjustment to the new conditions, to prepare the working class for the decisive revolutionary class battles, strengthening the independent rôle of the Communist Parties in leadership of them, *sharpening* the struggle against Social-Democracy; opportunist elements within the Communist International openly attempted during these turning points, to drag the Communist Parties *back*. They did this by *adjusting themselves to Social-Democracy, to its "left" manœuvres,* helping the Social-Democracy, through its "left" and "most left" agency, to deceive the working masses (who were deserting them) into believing that Social-Democracy belongs to this side of the barricade; that there is no *fundamental* difference between Communism and Social-Democracy, that the leaders of the "left" Social-Democracy are moving towards Communism, fluctuating between Communism or Socialism.

The meaning of the struggle against the rights and conciliationists during the VI Congress of the Communist International (which outlined the perspective of the crisis of the capitalist stabilisation and a new revolutionary upsurge) consisted precisely in the necessity of mobilising the masses for the *struggle,* and preparation of a *counter-offensive and offensive* of the working class. The right conciliationists saw nothing but the strengthening of capitalism, nothing but defeats of the working class, and, reflecting the interests and sentiments of the labour aristocracy, derived the opportunist lesson of the postponement of the revolutionary upsurge and the proletarian revolution for a long period from the series of previous labour defeats.

Even at the XV Congress of the C.P.S.U. (b) Comrade Stalin, in analysing the development of the contradictions of the partial stabilisation of capitalism, noted, that the fact that the capitalist countries had restored and exceeded the pre-war level of production and trade, did not signify that the stabilisation of capitalism had become firm and lasting, but that, on the contrary

"From the very fact of the stabilisation, from the fact that production grows, from the fact that trade grows, from the fact that technical progress and the production possibilities grow while the world market, the division of this market and of the spheres of influence of the different imperialist groups remain more or less stable, precisely this fact leads to the most profound and most acute crisis of world capitalism, fraught with new wars and threatening the existence of any stabilisation."

At that time the rights and the conciliationists denied this perspective. Comrade Bukharin's draft theses and concluding speech at the VI Congress of the Comintern, revealed an underestimation of the shattering of capitalist stabilisation and development of the internal contradictions of capitalism, an under-estimation of the uprise of the revolutionary class struggle of the proletariat. In their attack upon the policy of the Communist International, the rights and conciliationists, headed by Humbert Droz and Serra (meeting of the political secretariat of the E.C.C.I. of December 4, 1928), based themselves upon the memorandum of the German conciliationists, which spoke of the "economic consolidation of the foundations of the present relative stabilisation and therefore of the political power of the bourgeoisie."

Three years of the destructive world economic crisis of capitalism have elapsed since that time. The Social-Democratic theories of "organised capitalism," "industrial democracy," of the growth of the material standards of the working class on the basis of capitalist rationalisation, have burst like a soap bubble. The Social-Democratic theories (repeated by the rights and conciliationists) of "exclusiveness" and "capitalist harmony" have also fizzled out, bankrupt. There are no longer (and there cannot be) any Social-Democratic theoreticians

denying the existence of the crisis of capitalist stabilisation. The historical rôle of Social-Democracy, and its opportunist agency in the ranks of the Communist Parties, in serving capitalism, has now changed. The end of the capitalist stabilisation has caused a tremendous growth of the revolutionary uplift among the working masses. But this growth has developed unevenly. The development of the revolutionary class struggle of the proletariat, its rise to a higher stage, prompts the capitalists to sharper forms of attack upon the working class; more acute methods of Fascist terror against labour. The whole Social-Fascist camp shrieks about a new period of "retreat" of the labour movement. Among the ranks of the Communist vanguard there again, as during all previous periods of growth of a crisis in Social-Democracy, appears an auxiliary detachment which "interprets" the uneven development of the revolutionary movement, not from the viewpoint of the general development of the revolutionary movement *forward*, but that of the individual setbacks which the working class sustains in its general offensive at the hands of the class enemy, converting *these* factors into the main line of development.

It is characteristic, and not at all accidental, that the most striking concrete bearers of this new outbreak of opportunism, and capitulation to Social-Democracy, are the very same "commentators" of the decisions of the VI Congress of the Communist International, who distorted the line of the VI Congress of the Comintern in a grossly opportunist manner, on the eve of the third period, to drag the Communist vanguard into the Social-Democratic swamp.

Precisely on the eve of the forthcoming XII Plenum of the E.C.C.I., which is to frame the tactics of the Communist International under the conditions of the end of capitalist stabilisation, and especially the methods of struggle against the "leftest" manœuvres of Social-Democracy, which is attempting to *divert* the working masses from the real, concrete revolutionary class struggle under cover of talk about the great "prospects of Socialism" and "preparations for a general strike," under the leadership of the former conciliationist Humbert Droz, resolutions are drawn up in the Swiss Communist Party, which show what a great danger opportunism, especially right opportunism, the chief danger, represents at a time of transition to a new, higher stage of revolutionary development.

"It must be admitted," says the resolution drawn up by Comrade Humbert Droz, "that during the last years of crisis . . . the Communist Parties have not made any decisive steps forward. *On the contrary*. . . . This fact must be emphasised, by severe Bolshevist self-criticism, and the next Plenum of the E.C.C.I. must find the means of liquidating this position."

Thus, the eternal refrain of the opportunists' "Catastrophe" while on the basis of the development of the crisis of capitalism, and the revolutionary upsurge of the masses, the influence of the Communist vanguard nearly everywhere grows, and mass Communist Parties which are the only organisers and leaders of the revolutionary movement of the masses in a number of countries have grown out powerfully. Comrade Humbert Droz, instead of real Bolshevist self-criticism, of the causes of the insufficient utilisation by the Communist vanguard of all the objective possibilities afforded by the development of the world economic crisis and of all the contradictions of capitalism, shouts about the "defeats" of the Comintern.

According to Humbert Droz this practically means:

(a) Instead of emphasising the *sharpening* of all the contradictions of imperialism, as a result of all attempts made so far to overcome these contradictions by means of "organised" capitalist agreements (which by no means signifies any theory of the automatic collapse of capitalism), that is, instead of indicating the prospect of a *revolutionary* issue from the crisis, a different prospect is emphasised, that of the capitalist way out of the crisis. "War, impoverishment and enslavement of the oppressed nations and toiling classes,—such is the only possible path of the bourgeoisie for the temporary overcoming of the present crisis," says Comrade Humbert Droz's resolution.

(b) Instead of utilising the economic struggle of the proletariat, which interweaves more and more (even in Switzerland, which is least affected by the crisis; as exemplified by the Zurich barricades during the recent electricians' strike) with the direct *political* struggle against the bourgeois State apparatus; an artificial trade-unionist limitation of the strike struggle of the proletariat to purely economic confines, this being connected with the notorious theory of the Right Wingers of the pure defence of the working class. This is precisely the spirit which pervades a number of documents of the Red Trade-Union Opposition led by Comrade Humbert Droz and Comrade Bedeman, who once fought side by side with Humbert Droz in the right opposition.

(c) Instead of a struggle against democratic illusions — Social-Democratic refrains to the effect that "to mobilise the working class, and be capable of leading it in victorious battles, it is first necessary to capture a majority of the work-

ing class and its allies." From our Leninist point of view the majority of the working class can be captured only by mobilising it for struggle. Even for an uprising, according to Lenin, the capture of the decisive sections of the proletariat, at the decisive place, is sufficient. From Humbert Droz's point of view the working class can be mobilised for the struggle, only after its majority, and a majority of its allies have been captured. This is precisely what Otto Bauer preaches when he reduces to an "ideological base" the greatest betrayal of the working class of July 20 by German Social-Democracy* (which proclaimed the call for a mass political strike against Von Papen's Fascist coup, by the C.P. of Germany to be a provocation). According to Bauer it was wrong to strike, because a political strike requires a majority of the working class and of the whole people, and such a majority does not yet exist as the presidential, and Prussian Parliamentary elections have shown. This is precisely what the Russian Mensheviks said, against the October Revolution, and to which Lenin repeatedly replied both before and after the October Revolution (in his articles "The Bolsheviks Must Take over the Power," "The Elections to the Constituent Assembly," etc.) that for the decisive battle for power, it is sufficient, even, to have a majority of the most important sections of the proletariat in the decisive centres of the country.

"The Bolsheviks can, and must take over the State power into their own hands," wrote Lenin on the eve of October, "for an active majority of the revolutionary elements of the people of the two capitals is sufficient to instigate the masses, to crush the resistance of the enemy, to defeat him, to capture the power and maintain it. . . . A majority in the Soviets of the capitals represents the *fruit* of the growth of the people to our side."

(d) Instead of *strengthening* the struggle against the Social-Democracy, and exposing the truly treacherous character of the "left" and "leftist" Social-Democracy before the widest working masses; a "trustful" attitude to these manœuvres and an actual capitulation to Social-Democracy. According to Humbert Droz the Geneva Social-Fascist Nicole represents the extreme "left" (in brackets without quotation marks???) flank of the Social-Democracy, which on a number of the most important international problems, and particularly on that of the struggle against imperialist war has "identical aims with Communism." According to Humbert Droz, the "extremely left" Geneva Social-democrat Nicole "is moving towards Communism" and his entire "error" consists in that he "insufficiently exposes the right leaders of the Social-Democracy, and does not throw the reformist bureaucrats out of the trade union." Hence the hushing up of the historical mission of the "left" Social-Democracy, as a channel draining the workers off from Communist influence, in the main chapter in Comrade Droz's resolution on the Social-Democracy. Hence the capitulationist position in the united front policy: the "bloc" with the "extreme left" Social-Democrat Nicole instead of *strengthening the campaign exposing him* among the revolutionary inclined Geneva Social-Democratic workers, who still trust him. Hence also the proposal, monstrous in Communists, to organise Communist fractions *within* the "extreme left" Geneva Social-Democratic Party led by Nicole: Comrade Humbert Droz has forgotten the 21 conditions of the Comintern! A differentiation between the different wings of the Social-Fascist camp is necessary, of course. But this must be a differentiation *only of the methods of the struggle against and exposure of* the different Social-Democratic *groups in accordance with their methods of deceiving the working class.*

(e) Instead of merciless determined exposure of the right renegade Bringolf, who deceitfully captured the Schiffhausen party organisation, and has been conducting subversive, provocative activities against the Communist Party of Switzerland for two years; a "trustful" attitude to the rumours spread by this Social-Fascist agent, on his "desire" to return to the ranks of the Communist Party, and serious attempts to raise the question of the conditions for his reinstatement in the Communist International (whether he will be admitted should he dissolve his organisation?). Just as the German conciliationists in 1928/29 demanded "the concentration of all Communist forces" down to the expelled renegades Brandler and Thalheimer! You have forgotten the 21 conditions of the Comintern, Comrade Humbert Droz!

(f) Instead of strengthening the leading rôle of the Communist Party; a trade unionist approach to the question of the relations of the Party to the trade unions. According to Humbert Droz the resolutions of the Party, dealing with the tactics of revolutionary T.U. organisations cannot be carried into effect, and must be recalled for "revision" (even if this resolution is correct, Comrade Humbert Droz's resolution explains, for the sake of precision?) if the Communists working in the trade union organisations are opposed to this decision. Here we have a direct denial of the rôle of the Communist fractions in the trade unions and other mass organisations of the working class. You have forgotten the 21 con-

* See No. 15, "Communist International."

ditions of the Comintern, Comrade Humbert Droz!

Now we see the purpose of Comrade Humbert Droz's slanderous assertions that "during the last years of crisis . . . the Communist Parties have not made any decisive progress. *On the contrary.*" His purpose was to sound a retreat before the difficulties, and to call for adjustment to Social-Democracy.

Under the bombardment of criticism from the E.C.C.I. Comrade Humbert Droz has recognised the opportunist character of his resolution. He must now confirm this admission by action. In any event, this does not remove the obligation to subject this resolution to public criticism from us. For here we have before us a new *international platform* of the right wingers which Comrade Humbert Droz has presented to the forthcoming XII Plenum of the E.C.C.I. For here we are concerned with *an international platform* representing a direct continuation of the struggle against the general line of the Communist International, which the rights and conciliationists carried on during the turn from the second to the third period in 1928/29. Here we are concerned with a new international opportunist platform at the time of a new political turn of the Communist vanguard. The XII Plenum of the E.C.C.I. will have to urge all the sections of the Communist International to the greatest vigilance in the present preparation of the masses for the decisive revolutionary battles, and for the merciless struggle against reviving right opportunism as well as the left sectarianism feeding it, both of which lead to passiveness, rejection of the revolutionary struggle, and capitulation to Social-Democracy.

Higher the Bolshevist banner of struggle for the dictatorship of the proletariat! Heavier Bolshevist bombardment of opportunism!

THE MAIN LINK OF THE REVOLUTIONARY UPSURGE

U. Lensky.

THE greatest good fortune of the Communist Party of Poland was that it was capable of grasping the main link in the development of the revolutionary movement, and that it understood how to apply this chief element of Bolshevist tactics in its work.

The main link which made it possible for the Polish Party to tug the whole chain of mass struggles, as a factor which quickened the maturing of the revolutionary crisis, has become the wide strike movement of the working class in combination with other sharpened forms of struggle.

This is why such a lot of attention was devoted by the leadership of the Polish Party to these questions in resolutions, articles and directives. A number of problems, connected with an estimate and tactics of the strike struggle, have already been touched upon in the "Communist International."* We will not return to them. What is important, at present, is to draw the political conclusions from our experience, not only in relation to Poland but also to other countries, on the background of the present situation in conditions of a more or less quickened ripening of the revolutionary crisis.

In this respect we find the dialectic method of analysis of the strike movement in Lenin. The Leninist method must be applied to the present conditions of the crisis of capitalism and revolutionary upsurge.

With the aid of an analysis of the strike wave, Lenin defined "the critical turning points of the entire social and political life of the country," since he saw, in the statistics of strikes, the movement of the class which "will be the mainspring of the general development of events." "The movement of other classes,—says Lenin,—groups around this centre and follows it, is directed by it, is determined by it and depends upon it." (Vol. XV., page 41, Russian Edition).

It is from this point of view that we must estimate the modern strike movement in capitalist countries also, as the soil out of which the decisive struggles for a revolutionary way out of the crisis will grow

I.

While we spoke of the strike struggle in Poland, at the XIth plenum of the E.C.C.I. chiefly as that which was proceeding in small and average industry, we find that the strike movement now embraces, to a greater or lesser degree, also almost all branches of big industry, and all detachments of the working proletariat.

*See Nos. 11/12, 14, "Communist International."

With the growth of the offensive of capital, the front of the strike struggle widens, a struggle in the process of which, the working masses are beginning to pass over to a counter-offensive. The offensive of capital is developing all along the line to-day, and strikes at all the gains of the proletariat, in all spheres of labour. The concentrated attack of the capitalists aims at the collective agreements system first of all, and tries to force individual contracts upon the proletariat so that it may divide the labour army in this manner, weaken its resistance and place all the burdens of the disastrous economic crisis upon its shoulders. The struggle is literally one of life and death. For, even according to the official statistics of the Economic Institute, the index of the real value of wages has fallen 44 per cent. during the crisis, but the actual fall is not less than 60 per cent. "The wages of a Polish miner," —writes the bourgeois press,—"is 9 times below that of a worker in the U.S.A. and almost 2½ times lower than the wages of a German worker, and it must be remembered that the miners belong to the best paid workers in Poland." The new wage cut effected by the employers reaches 15-30 per cent. The bourgeoisie is trying to push the working class down to a starvation level, unprecedented in the history of capitalist economy.

It is on this soil *that the mass basis of the strike struggle is broadening*. One may find proof of this both in the obviously castrated official statistics, and also in the statistics of the R.I.L.U. (Red International of Labour Unions), which though not by any means complete, yet conform more to the actual state of things. According to the figures of the R.I.L.U., which only embrace the most important strikes, there were 97 strikes in the first quarter of this year which affected 620,000 workers, while during the whole of last year we had 100 strikes affecting 172,000 workers. And so the number of strikers this year has increased proportionately (per quarter) almost 14 times, and every strike involved, on the average, almost 4 times as many workers. *The preponderance of workers of big trustified industry has become clearly apparent*. The duration of the strikes has also increased (on the average to nearly 3 weeks). The fight becomes ever more stubborn. Such heroic examples as the strike of the Donbrowo miners which lasted a month and the strike of Bielostok textile workers, which lasted almost two months, are of exceptional international significance. A no less eloquent proof of the fighting persistence of the working masses, is the frequent recurrence of strikes in given factories and branches of industry (from 3 to 8 times in the course of a year).

During recent months (May, June, July and August) the strike struggle which embraced ever wider sections of the proletariat, although not to an equal degree, has not led to big battles such as the general strike of 40,000 miners. The strike of the Lodz textile workers might have become such a battle if the activity of the Lodz organisation had been up to the mark. The fact that we had won in the middle of June the overwhelming majority of delegates and representatives of factories (400 out of 500) at a conference, *called by the reformist trade unions*, is irrefutable evidence of the considerable strike tension among the broad working masses. The vote by 4/5ths of the conference, despite its reformist organisers, in favour of handing over the leadership to the Central Strike Committee, proves what a big influence the trade union left wing has won in the masses. Even the central organ of the Social-Fascists, the "Robotnik," was compelled to recognise the defeat of the P.P.S. (Polish Socialist Party) and the victory of the Communists.

"At times,"—writes a correspondent,—"the meeting was very stormy. After prolonged debate at nearly one o'clock in the morning the meeting proceeded to vote upon the proposals. A majority of votes rejected the proposal to hand over the leadership of the strike to the trade unions and to authorise these unions to form a strike commission. After this, the leadership was handed over to the so-called committee of action by some (?! U.L.) majority of the 'extreme opposition.' After this, it was almost unanimously decided to declare a strike."

However, after such a victory, our organisation was not strong enough to immediately mobilise the factories, and draw the Lodz textile workers into the strike, which had been declared. It appears that our comrades considered, that with such a mood among the masses, the reflection of which was the delegate conference, the declaration of the strike itself was enough. The inadequate concentration of efforts upon the decisive points, upon a few of the more important factories, and the hope that the mass will come out "by itself," and, worse than all, that the P.P.S. would support the strike, that the P.P.S. delegates would themselves mobilise their factories, and the retreat of some members of the Central Strike Committee before difficulties, a retreat, which bordered upon strike-breaking,—all this led to a failure of the movement. The strike only affected 6,000 textile workers, mainly in the small factories.

An unusual variation of the strike movement is the *seizure of factories*, frequently combined with strikes. This is the second main form of

the struggle against the offensive of capital, particularly against reductions in staff. The movement has assumed a mass character and involved a number of factories and plants, and tens of thousands of workers. The movement rose to a higher level as compared with last year. Thanks to our agitation, and, above all, as a result of their own experience, the workers convinced themselves that it is not enough to remain passively in the factories but that it was necessary to get into touch with the workers of other factories, and the unemployed, and lead the struggle beyond the confines of the factory which had been occupied.

The repeated strike of 1,000 workers in the Hortenzia Plant in Petrokov, which lasted 40 days, is a heroic example of such a struggle. It must be emphasised that the Hortenzia workers avoided many of the past year's mistakes. The action was much better organised, contact with the non-factory mass was more assured, and outside assistance more efficiently arranged. The strike committee won the confidence, not only of the workers who occupied the factory, but also of those of other factories, as well as the unemployed, and partly of the local poor peasants. Thanks to the organisation of mass self-defence, the continuous strike picketing and systematic meetings at which the position was reported, upon a factory kitchen and a kitchen for the strikers' families, — thanks to all this, the workers occupied the factory for 17 days, and there was a simultaneous struggle around this factory between the concentrated police detachments, and a crowd of women and unemployed which pushed them very hard.

Still, the efforts of our organisation to extend the strike to other factories, and organise not only material, but strike assistance, and to make the captured factory a centre of mass demonstrative action, leading a campaign around it throughout the country,—were all inadequate.

The workers of Pabianitzi have recently made an exemplary seizure of a factory, accompanied by a struggle on the streets, and solidarity strikes. While 700 workers occupied the factory, a crowd of 3,000 workers demonstrated on the streets, and fought stubbornly against the police under the factory walls, after which the fight was continued on its territory. Here are a few of the more characteristic features as described by the bourgeois press.

"On the 4th day (16th of June), a crowd of unemployed and workers of other factories tried to break into the territory of the factory, and unite with the workers who had occupied it. The police, however, scattered the aggressors with their batons. Soon after this, a crowd of 3,000 persons fell upon the factory from four sides and attacked the police with stones. The crowd was dispersed for a second time. At this time *a conference on the question of the liquidation of the strike* was taking place in the offices of the trade union (the reformist union—U.L.). This was a wild strike, i.e., one which was organised by the Communists despite the trade union. A portion of the crowd made its way to the union offices. The workers, assembled at these offices, formed a procession and marched to the seized factory. The police, on being stoned by the crowd, began to shoot, but this also had no effect. The crowd got to the factory and started *to erect barricades.* Police reinforcements were called out, who proceeded to disperse the crowd with their batons and with the aid of tear gas. The workers within the factory tried to smash the gates and renew the demonstration. When the police entered the factory, a regular battle began with the workers, who defended themselves with stones, sticks, hydrochloric acid and jets of water from the fire hose. *The fight continued for nine hours."*

We perceive from this description what a sharp character the resistance of the workers assumed, and that it manifested *elements of civil war.* Similar elements were to be observed in other movements of the working class, for whom bloody collisions with the police have almost become their daily bread. The strike movement, which has brought the working masses into ever sharper collision with the apparatus of the fascist dictatorship, is drawing them into political life and bringing them face to face with the question of power, the question of a revolutionary way out of the crisis.

The strike struggle of the Polish proletariat has proved, despite the right wing Trotskyist theories of crises, situations, that the working class, notwithstanding the tremendous unemployment and the furious fascist terror, is capable of resisting the offensive of capital, of repulsing *individual* attacks of the capitalists, of making the realisation of their attempts at an outlet from, or an amelioration of, the crisis more difficult. This is most important.

But the higher the strike wave rises, the greater the obstacles and difficulties which the struggle of the workers encounters. This leads to a considerable drop in the number of successful strikes. Despite unusual persistence, a number of strikes end in material failure. The Communist Party must clarify itself in regard to the causes of the growing difficulties, so that it may overcome them, and may apply forms of organisation and strike tactics to them resulting in a successful prosecution of the struggle. We will return to this question in the next chapter.

A guarantee for a successful strike struggle is the widening of its front *on the basis of partial strikes* and the sharpening of its forms by means of mass demonstrations, stubborn fight for the streets, and strikes of solidarity and protest, with the aid of an extensive interweaving of economic and political strikes, and mass revolutionary strikes.

The principles of the extension and intensification of the struggle apply in a different degree to the unemployed movement, the fundamental weakness of which lies in the inadequate co-ordination of the remarkable fighting actions of the unemployed themselves, and the insufficient linking up of their struggle with that of the employed, which threatens the scattering of the forces of the proletarian army. The co-ordination of the huge masses of unemployed is a necessary condition for resistance to the furious attacks of capital on the entire working class. The extensive participation of the unemployed in the last strike struggles has brought to light the serious possibilities of leading both the revolutionary currents into one common channel. The struggle against the offensive of capital in defence of the everyday needs and gains of the proletariat is now the chief means of mobilising the masses. It draws even what would seem the passive and actually less organised detachments of the working class into the revolutionary movement.

"We must reckon with this economic movement —wrote Lenin in 1908—as a radical source and most important basis of the whole developing crisis in Russia."

The task of the Communist Party is to saturate, systematically, persistently and day by day, this movement with political consciousness and raise it to higher and sharpened forms, the most important of which is, at present, the mass revolutionary strike.

II.

Political strikes grow out of the soil of sharpening economic struggles. The resistance rendered by the working masses to the offensive of capital is becoming sharper and sharper. Economic strikes are almost everywhere accompanied by demonstrations of strikers with the participation of the unemployed, and ever more stubborn and bloody struggle for the streets, frequently leading to the disarmament of the police. The economic struggle attains a higher level of political and revolutionary intensity in these conditions. In these conditions the growth of economic strikes into political ones is universally characteristic, equally with their mutual interweaving with the *present political situation.*

The strike of 40,000 miners, during which the masses were always on the street and heroically fought for the streets with detachments of police, armed to the teeth, has shown this most strikingly.

The economic demands are inseparably interlacing with the political ones, in a whole number of strikes.

The main factor of the development of political strikes is the widening of the fighting front against the offensive of capital, the growing of *big* struggles against the concentrated attacks of capital on the basis of partial strikes, big strikes which involve entire branches of industry. The miners' strike in the Dombrowo and Cracow areas have played such a part. *This strike signified a serious move in the correlation of the class forces in favour of the proletariat throughout the whole of Poland.* The stubborn miners' struggle, which lasted for a month, has roused other hesitating detachments of the working class, awakened resistance to the offensive of capital in them and drawn them into the strike movement.

A wide wave of solidarity strikes and protest strikes of all kinds was aroused by the bloody violence of the police on the Dombrowo miners. The general political protest strike broke out all over the area on this basis, on the 16th of March, which, despite the social-fascists, and thanks to the activity of our party, assumed in a number of places, particularly in the decisive proletarian centres, the character of a mass revolutionary strike. Embracing a considerable majority of the working proletariat (over 300,000), and what was most important, also a portion of the decisive detachments of the working class which previously stood outside the strike movement (the metal workers, the railwaymen, the workers in the military factories),—the strike of the 16th of March brought to light that *the strike movement is rising to a higher phase of political struggle.* A new period of political strikes, interlaced with economic ones, is beginning. And this is the most important feature in the development of the proletarian movement in Poland.

It is true that this interlacing is still weak, that the economic strikes preponderate, that the political strikes involve a still comparatively inconsiderable number of workers, but the main tendency which was characterised by Lenin, in his time, is cutting out its path, *placing on the order of the day the call for a mass revolutionary strike,* as a weapon of the hegemony of the proletariat in the struggle of the millions of working masses.

According to Lenin, political strikes apparently arise on a wide basis of economic strikes and "in the beginning of the movement and with the enrolment of new sections into the movement, the economic strike plays the dominant rôle, but on

the other hand, the political strike awakens and rouses the backward, it enriches and broadens the movement and raises it to a higher stage."

In agreement with this, the Party must develop the political strike on the mass basis of economic struggle, particularly against the bloody violence of the police, against concrete manifestations of fascist terror which is hitting wide masses of workers and peasants ever more strongly.

The higher the strike wave rises, the more clearly does the revolutionising character of the strike movement come to the surface. The range of the strike struggles of the proletariat, together with the general sharpening of the political situation, is exercising an influence on the millions of the masses of toiling exploited peasantry. The strike movement in the village embraces, first of all, the entire proletariat of agricultural labourers. After the dozens of strikes successfully directed by the Communists, the one-day demonstrative strike of the 18th of April embraced 100,000 agricultural labourers.

The wide peasant masses are also beginning to utilise the strike weapon in their fight against market tolls. Entire provinces declare a strike, refusing to come to the market until the market tolls are reduced. Thus, for instance, a strike of peasants, in the middle of May, involved almost all the villages of the Minska-Mazovetsk province. The city magistrate issued an appeal, calling upon the peasants to stop the strike. The appeal, however, had no effect, and the peasantry remained on strike solidly until their demands were conceded. Such a strike-boycott, of refusing to proceed to market, was applied by the peasants in the Radziminsk province, after bloody collisions in the township of Yadove (13th of July), during which "the crowd, armed with pruning forks, stones and bricks, fell upon the police, beat them and wounded several policemen" and themselves lost two killed and several dozen wounded.

A two-days protest strike against an increase in market tolls was also declared by the peasants in the Lovitsk province.

Following the example of the proletariat, the peasant masses are passing from scattered action to big battles, which signalise *the quickened ripening of the elements of an agrarian revolution.* The revolutionary peasant movement is rising to a higher phase, assuming the character of mass revolts against the exploitation and oppression of the fascist government and landlords. The, to a certain extent partial, rising in Lesk (in the beginning of July), which involved 19 villages and 10,000 peasants, bore this character. This partial rising of mainly Ukrainian, together with Polish, peasants was directed against the Polish occupation. The occasion for the struggle was conscription, for road work, in the guise of a "festival of labour." The peasant masses refused this forced labour, and when the "Starosta" (village head man) threatened them with the police, they fell upon the policemen, disarmed them, armed themselves with what they could, occupied a landlord's estate, and the house of a priest (where they found grenades), drove out the priest and the landlord, after which they entered upon a heroic fight against a new detachment of police, to assist whom 4,000 soldiers arrived for the purpose of a bloody punishment. The Lesk peasants were faced with the question of seizing the landlord's land. Among the killed and wounded were Communists, who had organised the resistance of the peasant masses.

Similar peasant action, although on a smaller scale, took place previously in southern White Russia. Thus, for instance, the struggle of the peasants in the village of Ostashino against taxation robbery became rapidly transformed into a battle of several villages against the police. One thousand peasants from the neighbouring villages were summoned with the aid of Red express messengers. An embittered battle took place with the detachments of the police. The peasants did not allow any arrests. No sooner did a punitive detachment of 150 police, armed with machine guns, and with the assistance of soldiers, master the situation, when the peasants unexpectedly attacked the police station (on the 8th of April), disarmed the police and captured arms. This type of peasant action was constantly repeated in other places (in the Pinsk and Brest areas).

The mass basis of the revolutionary peasant mivement is widening day by day. The catastrophic agrarian crisis, together with the robbery of the usurers and tax-collectors, is setting not only the broad masses of the peasant poor in motion, but the main mass of the middle peasantry, ruined by debts and taxes. The wide masses of the peasantry are smashing the bars of Fascist terrir and are passing to more direct forms of struggle. These masses are drawing nearer and nearer towards a direct struggle for confiscation of the land, towards an agrarian revolution. In this way, huge reserves of the growing proletarian revolution are approaching nearer to the proletariat, as its ally, in the fight against the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie. Spontaneity is, of course, much greater in the peasant movement than in the proletarian. With all the differences and peculiarities in the conditions of the struggle, however, we may now state that the disproportion between the two movements has been levelled,

that the hegemony of the proletariat has been consolidated and the union of the workers and peasants has become a real factor.

The range of the proletarian strike movement is also drawing the masses of the town petty-bourgeoisie into the struggle against monopolist capital and the bourgeois state. The population in a number of cities are applying the boycott-strike against increase in price of electric current. This movement is embracing hundreds of thousands of the town petty-bourgeoisie, which is a serious symptom that the petty-bourgeois masses are leaving the big bourgeoisie, and tend to draw nearer to the proletariat. The strike is becoming a form of struggle of hundreds of thousands of officials, who are plundered by the bourgeois state, and the bankrupt magistracies; on whom the bourgeoisie is trying to shift the burdens of the financial crisis. Hence the sharp narrowing of the mass basis of Pilsudskism. Hence the striving of Polish fascism to replace the masses by tried cadres. Hence the decomposition of the lower state apparatus. Hence the symptoms of discontent in the army, which is drawn into the struggle on the home front. Hence, finally, the ideological disintegration of the Pilsudskyites, the reflection of which is to be found in the origination of the group of national Communists who call for the application of planned economy in Poland. In this way, the scope of the proletarian struggle, the main link of which is the strike movement, together with the street demonstrations, is giving rise to profound class shiftings which are changing the correlation of forces in favour of the revolutionary proletariat. But this process does not proceed in a straight line, without fluctuation and zig-zags. If this were so, then the revolutionary crisis in Poland would already have been an accomplished fact long ago.

The process of the maturing of a revolutionary crisis is full of inequalities, conditioned not only by the relative weakness of the Communist organisations, but also in a considerable measure by the growing objective difficulties which the revolutionary movement encounters in its development. This doubly unified dialectic process (the basis of which is the fact that the growing proletarian revolution is consolidating the forces of the bourgeois counter-revolution, though by no means signifying a growth of the bourgeois forces) strengthens the resistance of the entire bourgeoisie, despite its decomposition, contradictions and inner friction.

In its fight with the revolutionary movement, *rising to a higher stage,* the bourgeoisie is resorting to sharpened forms of terror, to methods of civil war, and the fascist system of the end of capitalist stabilisation. The bloody proceedings in town and village, the field-courts and gallows for anti-state crimes," for participation in a strike of state employees and municipal functionaires,—such is the "higher" form of the fascist system of rule in the period of the growing proletarian revolution. This preventive terror of fascism, which is assuming the dimensions of a civil war, not only in Poland, but also in Germany, together with the calamities of unemployment and mass dismissals, and also the growing obstinacy of punitive capital, in its furious attack on all spheres of labour, is the fundamental objective difficulty in the development of the revolutionary movement.

The bourgeoisie is simultaneously trying to perfect and enrich its system of deceit, to check the process of revolutionisation of the masses, draw these masses into the net of democratic diversions with the aid of social-fascist impostors, and propel them, under radical-democratic slogans, along the path of a capitalist way out of the crisis.

The manoeuvres of social-fascism, and its left-wing offspring, are becoming ever more flexible and subtle. It would be idle to determine the objective limits to this manoeuvring at present, on the eve of the transition to a new round of wars and revolutions. As the objective possibilities for manoeuvring become narrower, the manoeuvring capacities of social-fasm become stronger, and its manoeuvres "perfected." The unusually supple strike (strike-breaking) tactics of the social-fascists are accompanied not only by anti-capitalist, but *also by anti-reformist phraseology.* And this is the new point about their manoeuvring. Instead of "curing capitalism, it must be destroyed."

> "Capitalism"—says the resolution of the miners' Union Executive—"in the present period of its development has entered such a profound principle contradiction, with the interests, not only of the manual and brain workers, but also of the millions of peasant and petty-bourgeoisie, that its removal is becoming a matter of vital interest for the majority of society. The spreading among the working class, of views, that the present crisis may be overcome by way of reforms, without the abolition of the capitalist system is harmful, since it diverts the attention from the necessity of fighting against the capitalist system, supports its sickly existence, and deepens the poverty of the masses."

The anti-reformist phraseology of the P.P.S. is eloquent proof of the complete bankruptcy of its previous programme for curing capitalism, in the eyes of the masses. The P.P.S. also cannot go to the masses now with the bankrupt slogans of

parliamentary democracy, in the form of a centrist-left government. It preaches "the restoration of democracy and the formation of a workers' and peasants' government," proclaiming the slogan of a Polish people's republic. The worker and peasant masses do not want to return to the republic of Pilsudski, Dachinsky, Witos and Co., out of which the fascist dictatorship arose. In view of this, the Polish social-fascists, like their German confrères, cry: "Long live the second republic, based upon 'honest democracy,' and growing into socialism."

Under the pressure of the sympathy of the toiling masses for the U.S.S.R., their hatred of imperialist war, and readiness to defend the Socialist fatherland, and the great success of the Anti-War Congress, the social-fascists are beginning to oppose, on paper, anti-Soviet intervention, while simultaneously reviling the anti-war campaign of the Communists, and Socialist construction in the Soviet Union.

Thanks to its cunning manoeuvres, which sometimes perplex our party organisations, social-fascism is checking the streaming of the masses to Communism, and the decomposition of its own ranks. The tempo of this decomposition does not correspond to the favourable objective conditions.

The united kulak party is applying manoeuvres no less artful. The leaders of these parties, under pressure of the masses, sometimes head peasants' strikes, to keep them within limits of fascist legality, and even organise peasant committees in some districts, depriving them of the sharpness of organs of mass struggle. The comparative weakness of our organisations in the village makes it easier for the kulak leaders, operating with the slogans of class unity of the peasants and radical opposition phraseology to seize upon the profound discontent of the peasant masses—the middle-peasantry and peasant poor. The growing political activity of these masses, which the Peasant Union is trying to capture, is characterised by the typically kulak leader, Witos, in one of his articles in the following manner:

> "People are now so agitated that a meeting of over 2,000 peasants is regarded as a small affair. No less than 10,000 persons have attended my meetings. Recently nearly 20,000 peasants came to a meeting in Zamostye, 10,000 in Zabav, and 32,000 in Limanova. I have addressed nearly a quarter of a million people during the last three months. I do not, of course, agitate for a revolution among the peasants and do not lead to it . . . "

The political activity of the peasants, despite the efforts of the kulak leaders, frequently breaks the barriers of legality which is evidenced by the bloody collisions with the police, as was the case in Limanova, Lapanova, etc.

While overcoming the growing obstacles and difficulties, the revolutionary movement of the proletariat, and the exploited peasantry is broadening and strengthening its base. The furious fascist terror is not a product of the victorious counter-revolution, but a preventive measure of the decaying bourgeoisie in its struggle against the growing proletarian revolution. This terror cannot retard the revolutionary upsurge, and sharpens the forms of struggle of the worker and peasant masses.

"No persecution, no punishment—says Lenin—can stop the movement, once the *masses have risen*, once millions have begun to stir." The broad masses are following the revolutionary advance guard, the Communist Party. In the process of the day-to-day struggle, the Communist Party has made a serious step along the path of winning a majority of the proletariat, and the main masses of the peasantry. The quickened maturing of a revolutionary crisis in Poland demands the straining of all its forces from the Party, to solve this chief strategic problem of the present period at a rapid rate.

III.

The line which has been taken by the Polish Communist Party on the day-to-day struggles, as the main link of the revolutionary upsurge, and the effective realisation of this line, has made it possible for this illegal party, working under exceptional conditions of fascist terror, to link up politically and organisationally with the wide masses of the proletariat and peasants, and double the numbers in its ranks in the course of one year, becoming an organisation which, in some centres, numerically exceeds the legal social-fascist organisation. Despite the still considerable spontaneity and the partial interception of the moods in the masses by the social-fascist parties, there is no doubt now about the leading rôle of the Communist Party of Poland in the day-to-day struggle.

While organising the partial strikes, the Party has never descended to "economism"* and has not lost sight of the revolutionary perspective. The central point in the tactics of the Party was the broadening of the front of day-to-day, particularly strike struggles, in linking the revolutionary struggle up with the universally growing battles, and thus *leading the masses towards decisive battles for power on the basis of their own experience*. These tactics characterised the two strikes of the Warsaw tramway workers, the strikes of the Donbrowo miners, Upper Silesian blast furnace workers, and Lodz textile workers. These tactics have led to this, that even when

*See "What is to be done?" Lenin. M. Lawrence, Ltd.

the workers were not in a position to repel the attacks of the capitalists, the influence of our organisation still increased, in so far as the masses convinced themselves that it did not spare any efforts to lead the fight to a victorious issue. So it was in the general miners' strike, which was evidenced by the 1st of May demonstration, which mustered the main mass of the Donbrowo proletariat under our banners; also by the impetuous growth of the Trade Union Left Wing.

The broadening of the strike struggle front has been linked up by the Party with its *course to a general strike.* The general protest strike of the 16th of March, has brought to light the tremendous popularity of the slogan of a revolutionary general strike in the masses. It would be, of course, a species of "economism" to regard this strike as a mechanical continuation of partial strikes, as simply its sum total. It is clear that such a strike requires a corresponding sharpening of the entire political situation, and a high level of revolutionary activity of the widest masses. The popularisation of the slogan of a general strike in the masses must be linked up with the perspective of a direct struggle for power, and the propaganda of an armed rising of workers, peasants and soldiers.

The path to such a strike leads, through a broadening of the strike struggle front, particularly among the decisive detachments of the proletariat—the metal workers and railwaymen—through a wide interweaving of economic strikes with political strikes, through mass street demonstrations, through the co-ordination of the unemployed movement, and through great united battles and partial risings in the villages.

It is difficult at present to foresee the concrete process of the transition of a general revolutionary strike into a direct struggle for power. But even now, this perspective must lend political direction to all partial struggles.

Taking the course of leading the masses to a general revolutionary strike, we must already now reckon with the possibility of the growing of every big strike struggle, during the course of its progress, into a short general protest strike. Having the experience of the 16th of March before us, we must always be ready to grasp the initiative at the right moment and assume the leadership of such a strike from the very beginning.

The example of the 16th of March is, in this respect, of undoubted international significance. There were similar strikes in Hungary and Greece. They are symptoms that the conditions are maturing for a general revolutionary strike, in those countries which are closely approaching a revolutionary crisis.

It is quite clear that a general revolutionary strike is a component part of our revolutionary strategy, and its concrete application. The rôle of this strike may differ in various countries. In such countries as Poland and Italy, a general revolutionary strike may be the means of a profound break in the iron chains of the fascist dictatorship, a means of bringing millions of the masses to the streets, uniting the scattered detachments of the proletariat, as a revolutionary class; an instrument strenthening its hegemony, and a measure of the co-relation of the class forces before the general battle.

We have entered a period of great strike battles against the furious offensive of capital. These battles are growing out of the soil of the day-to-day partial struggle and *these very battles unleash, at the same time, the partial struggle.* Every such battle broadens its basis and attains a higher level. The heroic strike of the Polish miners finds a sort of similarity in the more organised strike of the Czech miners. Both these strikes have brought to light a considerable degree of the revolutionising of the working class, and the leading rôle of the Communists in the united front of the proletarian masses. Both these strikes—although to a different extent—have had a general national, i.e., a general revolutionising character, exercising as they did, an influence upon the development of the struggle of millions of oppressed and exploited. Both these strikes have been characterised by unusual persistency, despite the united efforts of capital, social-fascism and the bourgeois states for the rapid liquidation of the strike struggle. Both these strikes, particularly the Polish miners' strike, were directed against government arbitration. Both these strikes have ended in a political success for the Communists, and the strike of the Czecho-Slovakian miners has even resulted also in a material success. Both these strikes, particularly the strike of the Czech miners, have brought defeat to the social-fascists.

But the range of the Belgian miners' strike was greater than all. It embraced almost the entire mining industry of Belgium, and passed over into a general strike of entire industrial areas, with comparative rapidity, drawing considerable masses of metal workers into the strike struggle. This strike, as a factor of profound class upheavals in Belgium, we could name, in accordance with the definition of Lenin, "the crisis of capitalist society" signalising the ripening of a proletarian revolution. This strike has become transformed into a general political movement of an entire area, into stormy battles for the streets, into bloody collisions of masses of strikers with the gendarmerie and partial cases of fraternisation with the soldiers. "Does not the calling out of

soldiers in times of strike—says Lenin—in all, even what are politely called the most peaceful and the most 'democratic' countries, show how matters will stand in times of really big crises?" (On the 1905 Revolution). In this respect, the Belgian strike provides a highly instructive example. The exceptional and almost monopolistic influence of the tiny Communist Party was hammered out in the process of this strike. Strike-breaking manoeuvres were smashed by the fighting consistency of the masses.

And so we see that *the wide strike movement is the fundamental link of the revolutionary upsurge of all capitalist countries.* Its weakness in Germany does not contradict the general line of development. This weakness is one of the signs of the lagging of the subjective factor behind the objective conditions. It is true that the development of the strike movement in Germany encounters special difficulties (the huge power of the reformist trade unions and Social-Democracy, the offensive of capital carried out directly by the capitalist state, the enormous pressure of unemployment, the pressure of nationalistic ideology created by the chains of the Versailles treaty, etc.). Nevertheless, the uninterrupted offensive of capital is undoubtedly strengthening the moods for resistance in the working masses. The development of the strike struggles of the German proletariat will depend upon the methods of work, and forms of the organisational ties of the Party and the left trade unions with the masses.

The principal difference between the *practice* of the Communist Party of Poland and the German Communist Party is that while the Polish Communists, when preparing to beat off every attack of the capitalists on a wide front have organised, from the very beginning, action in the individual enterprises—the German Communists, in a number of instances, when preparing for big struggles, did not devote sufficient attention to partial strikes in reply to every attack of the capitalists. While the efforts of the Polish Communists were directed to the end of the strikes being accepted by the broad sections of the interested workers, the German Communists, despite the line of the Party leadership, sometimes tried to adopt methods of commanding in strikes. Decisions were taken, not in the factories, and at conferences of factory delegates, but at conferences isolated from the factories and without a wide series of preliminary conferences and factory mass meetings. We do not speak here of individual, better examples of strike practice in Germany. Inadequate persistency in preparatory work, insufficient concentration of effort on the key enterprises, attempts to act from above instead of a wide mobilisation from below—all this prevented the necessary scope of the strike struggle in Germany. The absence of *systematic* resistance of the working masses has made it easier for the German bourgeoisie to pass a number of Emergency Decrees, behind which stood the entire apparatus of the bourgeois state. And yet the strike wave in Poland prevented the government of Pilsudsky from following the German example. The government of Pilsudsky was forced, for the time being, to swallow its first attempt at the liquidation of state social insurance, under the influence of but a threat of a general protest strike. This manoeuvre of the government could not prevent the strike.

We have no intention at all of affirming that the strike struggle must play the same part everywhere as it does, for instance, in Poland. With the present degree of radicalisation of the millions of masses of the German proletariat, drawn into the whirlpool of the political struggle, and the present home and foreign situation of Germany, the sharp economic crisis, the growing political pressure of the fascist régime, and the partial political crisis of the fascist régime at the top, — in this situation in Germany, the strike movement cannot play so big a part, compared with other forms of political struggle, as it does in Poland. The heroic examples of the physical mass resistance to the fascist bands, such as Altenau, are becoming a model worthy of imitation by other countries. But the political struggles, in awakening in the working class a feeling of its own power, will also unleash and give rise to a strike struggle of the working masses against the economic offensive of capital. And on the other hand, under the influence of these two factors, mass political strikes will grow up to a general revolutionary strike, the splendid traditions of which are still alive in the German proletariat.

The general line of development of the revolutionary upsurge in Germany is, *in the main,* the same as in Poland : not an automatic leap towards the decisive battles for power, but a quickened approach to them in the progress of the various forms of day-to-day battles (systematic resistance to the terror of fascist bands, economic and political strikes, demonstrations, etc.). One must run before one jumps. And this run forward of the proletariat can only be attained in the process of stubborn day-to-day struggle. The tactics of the united front from below are still the most successful means for the revolutionary mobilisation of the masses. The Communist Party of Germany, despite its individual mistakes, has provided examples of Bolshevist application of

these tactics recently which should be studied by other sections of the Comintern.

Only the wide united front, the starting point of which is the spontaneous yearning of the masses for unity in the struggle against the offensive of capital and fascism, can become the lever which will set millions of masses of the proletariat in motion. Only the tactics of the united front, deprived of illusions in relation to social-fascism, free from the capitulation and underestimation of our independent leading rôle of the right wing, and "left" commanding of the masses,—only this will make it possible for us to win the masses who are following the Social-Democracy, and smash its mass basis among the proletariat.

The greatest obstacle in this path is the conception of the united front as an understanding, or a bloc, with the social-fascist leaders. This united front from above, which was some time ago applied by the right wing group of Brandler in the German Communist Party and by Kostcheva in Poland, is beginning to arise again in various forms among those militants (it is true, but individual ones) who are ready to accept the "left" manoeuvres of Social-Democracy as sterling, as a factor, which, it is alleged, will help us in the organisation of the day-to-day struggle. These militants regard the recent measures of the German comrades, directed to the exposure of the leaders of Social-Democracy, as a united front from above with these leaders, and demand the application of the same methods in Poland.

They forget that the Sixth Congress of the Comintern, proceeding from the necessity of sharpening the struggle against Social-Democracy, emphatically shifted the centre of gravity to the united front from below, i.e., also *"with the sincerely erring Social-Democratic workers."* This proposition remains absolutely essential in the present conditions of volcanic tension in class antagonisms. The united front, as a method of mobilisation of the working masses *for the revolutionary struggle*, has nothing in common with the coaxing of the Social-Democratic headquarters, which is based upon the opportunist view, that Social-Democracy is ceasing to be the chief social support of the bourgeoisie in the working class. There have been a number of occasions on which there was a relapse to the theory of the double-edged weapons, which is accompanied by a retreat before the growing difficulties of the independent leadership of the strike struggles. This theory has become the source of opportunist mistakes of the Czech comrades in Ostrau at the time of the miners' strike.* Holding the view that the left manoeuvres of Social-Democracy are radicalising the masses and are making it easier for us to win the reformist workers, these comrades found themselves at the tail end of the social-fascists.

The tendency to go a part of the way to Social-Democracy, to substitute the united front from below by the united front with the Social-Democratic headquarters, is at present the chief danger from the right. This tendency, just as the sectarian attitude to the Social-Democratic and non-party workers, isolates us from the masses.

Also one must not mechanically transfer the broadening of the framework of the united front in Germany, which has been called forth by the special situation in that country, to other sections, regardless of the concrete methods of manœuvring of Social-Democracy, its position in the state apparatus, of the co-relation of forces between us and the Social-Democracy, the degree of the process of decomposition in its rank-and-file organisations, etc. The same form, which under one set of conditions would facilitate the strengthening of its position in the masses, may weaken it, in another.

Every measure which is intended to expose the Social-Democratic leaders must be based upon the broad organisation of the united front from below with the non-party and the Social-Democratic workers.

Only with the aid of the tactic of the united front in its Bolshevist application, will the Communist Parties be able to win a majority of the working class for the overthrow of capitalism, for the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat, for a revolutionary way out of the crisis.

*See No. 11/12 "Communist International."

PLEASE NOTE

The publishers urgently need your spare copies of No. 8, Vol. IX, which will be allowed for at the usual rate.

THE WORLD ECONOMIC CRISIS AND THE END OF CAPITALIST STABILISATION

By L. MADYAR.

THE capitalist world has entered the fourth year of an unprecedented economic crisis. No justifiable foundation exists for the assertion that the crisis "is abating" since it grows deeper as time passes. Data covering the drop in production for individual countries or individual branches of production, and on the growing unemployment, indicate to what capacity the production equipment of various capitalist countries is loaded, how means of production and finished goods are being destroyed, wages being lowered and how capitalism has engineered its onslaught against the social gains of the working class. All this is striking proof of the fact that the crisis is becoming more and more acute. There is no need to examine the other indices of the crisis such as the decline in internal trade and freight turnover within certain countries and on the world market, the decline in prices, the widening gap between the prices of manufactured goods and agricultural produce, the rapid expansion of the credit crisis, the currency crisis in the majority of capitalist countries, mass bankruptcies, impoverishment, pauperism, the ruin of the petty bourgeois and peasant masses, etc. There is no point in wasting time and effort to prove incontrovertible facts.

There was a time when the question as to whether, or not, a crisis existed, and whether it would, or would not, spread was a matter of dispute. There was a time when the fluctuation of the market served as a point for discussion as to whether, or not, the crisis was coming to an end. There was much discussion, at one time, as to whether, or not, the crisis would affect all countries, and all branches of production, whether the development of the crisis would be eased or aggravated by the monopolistic character of capitalism, whether or not capitalism is organised, whether economic factors could be equalised or regulated under a condition of monopolistic capitalism. There has been considerable argument as to whether reparations and war debts cause the crisis and whether the removal of these problems would solve the crisis, whether the crisis could be solved by means of credit and currency reforms, whether a policy of deflation or inflation would put an end to the crisis, whether the expansion or restriction of credit would provide a way out of the crisis. All these debatable questions have been settled by the actual development of the crisis. The crisis has become all-embracing, it has swept over all countries and all branches of production. The monopolist character of capitalism aggravates the crisis instead of easing it. There is no "organised" capitalist economy. The levelling or regulation of market fluctuations is utterly impossible. Reparations and war debts are merely factors for intensifying the crisis, and are not its cause. Credit and currency measures cannot effect a cure of the crisis. Neither inflation nor deflation are a remedy for the crisis, etc., etc.

All bourgeois and Social-Democratic theories have been proved unsound. The Marxian-Leninist theory of crises alone has proved triumphant. It alone proved able to orientate itself in the complex manifestations of the crisis.

We believe it hardly necessary to prove that the boom which suddenly struck the New York Stock Exchange at the end of July and which registered so violent a jump, is no indication of an alleviation of the economic situation. The crisis is attacking Hoover, and the latter is now trying to wage war against the crisis. By mobilising the resources of the Financial Reconstruction Corporation, and the Federal Reserve Banks, and risking the stability of the dollar, the United States Government is injecting tremendous sums and huge credits into the money market for speculation on the Stock Exchange. Such measures have made it possible for quotations on the Stock Exchange to jump 80-100 per cent. during the course of a fortnight to three weeks. Naturally enough, short-term credit and free capital of other countries immediately turned towards the New York Stock Exchange to get in on the speculation. The prices of a number of speculative commodities, particularly non-ferrous metals and rubber, rose. American bankers promise to organise a "pool" in order to raise prices on wheat and cotton. In view of the poor wheat crop in the U.S.A. and prospects of a bad crop in Canada, prices on wheat have risen of themselves. Nevertheless, the activity of the Stock Exchange in no way corresponds to any actual improvement in the sphere of production and trade. On the contrary, July registered a further drop in production in the U.S.A. The Stock Exchange activity merely signalises that Hoover is impelled by a burning desire to win the presidential election and in no way indicates a turning point or change in the economic condition. There is very little room for doubt that the Stock Exchange activity in New York will only affect the crisis in so far as it will

serve as the beginning for a new serious relapse and further spread of the crisis.

We shall not attempt here to quote numerical data covering the three-year period of the world economic crisis, for they are fairly well known. Capitalist production has been *thrust back three or four decades as far as volume of production is concerned.* Even the economy of France, which two years ago, seemed an oasis in the desert of crisis, has proved a mirage, and dropped to a level below that of pre-war. The U.S.A., the dominant capitalist country, has sunk to the level of the nineties of the last century. As far as the volume of production is concerned, the entire capitalistic world, as a whole stands at the level of the close of the nineteenth, and beginning of the twentieth centuries. The volume of industrial production of the capitalist world has decreased 10 per cent. below that of the pre-war level. Productive forces have made gigantic strides forward during the said period. Therefore the contradictions between the developed productive forces and their capitalist social form are all the more acute. The post-war development of capitalism is characterised by the fact that an increasing share of the producing machinery of capitalism stands idle, which is one of the manifestations of a general capitalist crisis. This contradiction has now developed to a point of absurdity. Capitalist production moves in cycles. Capitalist production moves in a rotation of phases of lull, average production, boom, crisis. History has heretofore never recorded a capitalist crisis which forced capitalist production lower than the starting point of the cycle. In the period of monopolist capitalism the movement of the cycle has been subjected to considerable alterations. Its most serious changes have taken place during the period of the general crisis of capitalism. The world war, to begin with, forced capitalist production back several years below that of pre-war level. At the present time, momentarily free of large-scale wars, still free so far of world wars, the volume of production in the capitalist world has fallen back thirty to forty years.

The formation of a permanent army of unemployed among a constantly growing section of the working class is one of the manifestations of the general crisis. The chief, basic force of production, the revolutionary class,—the proletariat, has suffered most keenly from unemployment during the period of general crisis. The pulse of economic life beats too slowly for capitalism to be able to eliminate unemployment in the post-war period of a general capitalist crisis. On the contrary, we have seen a rise in production simultaneously with an increase in unemployment. Rationalisation effected this irrationality. However, at the present time over half the total number of industrial workers in the capitalist world are completely or partially unemployed. *More than half the production machinery, and more than half the basic force of production, the proletariat are beyond the pale of production.*

Capitalism's principal historical mission was to develop the forces of production. Such development progressed at a most rapid pace in consequence of crises. The renewal of basic capital, perfection of technique, and the improvement of the organic composition of capital, were the most significant means for overcoming crises. By adopting such measures, the capitalists sought to attain, and did attain, a reduction in production costs. Improved technique, plus wage-cuts, were the mainsprings for lowering production costs, and entering a new cycle. *Wage-cuts became the chief means in diminishing production costs during the present crisis.* Technical improvements and the renewal of basic capital have been extremely limited. The Economic Research Institute in Germany, in its most recent reports, established and proved that new capital investments are so insignificant throughout the capitalist world, and that production of means of production is so restricted, that they are inadequate to make good the amortisation of basic capital. Machine construction, and the production of means of production, were dealt most crushing blows in outstanding imperialist countries. Export of machinery from the U.S.A., England and Germany have in the main been to the U.S.S.R. New capital issues in the U.S.A. reveal a typical picture in this respect. The first three months of 1932 registered investments of $150,000 for private industry, $3,425,000 in railroads, and $115,000,000 in public utilities. Building activity in all capitalist lands was almost at a complete standstill in the spring of 1932. The supporters of the National Government in England pride themselves on the fact that the introduction of a tariff has speeded up building operations and that new factories are being built. As a matter of fact the new tariff has led to the transfer of a number of factories from Holland, Switzerland, and Germany to England. The manufactures concerned are articles like eau de Cologne, gloves, confectionery, perfumery, chocolate, etc. Production of this nature does not get one very far. It goes without saying that production of munitions for war is expanding in the U.S.A., Germany, Czecho-Slovakia and France; many metallurgical and chemical plants have turned to war production. New industrial construction is very rare and the engineering industry has been more severely affected by the crisis than have other

branches of industry. The metallurgical industry of the U.S.A. is working to only 12-15 per cent. capacity. German machine-tool plants are running at 30 per cent. capacity. The explanation of this is that rationalisation was effected during a period of boom. In the U.S.A., Germany, France, the renewal of basic capital and the improved technique were brought about during a wave of a rising economic prosperity, and this has created additional difficulties for the renewal of basic capital. Tremendous capital was expended to effect rationalisation. It would now be necessary to either morally or physically destroy this capital. Hence the reactionary theory prevalent in the bourgeois camp as to the danger of technical progress.

Never before has capitalism found itself in so grave a conflict with the forces of production which it has itself created, with science and technique and above all with the chief force of production—the proletariat, as it is now.

2.—NEW DEVELOPMENTS IN THE CRISIS.

The following new elements have come to the fore during the preceding year in the development of the crisis.

1. A further drop in industrial production. A deepening of the crisis in a number of countries which had managed to ward it off longer than others (France, the Scandinavian countries, etc.).

2. A marked intensification of the agrarian crisis which finds expression in the *universal scope* of said agrarian crisis, affecting all branches of agricultural production. The dairy and live stock branches, which withstood the early years of crisis comparatively well, have now also been drawn into its whirlpool. The agrarian crisis has already resulted in a decrease in the sown area, and in smaller livestock herds in many countries. There is a regressive movement towards raising food produce instead of technical crops. Quantities of mineral fertiliser used are continuously diminishing.

3. Another new feature in the development of the crisis is the noticeable decrease in the production of means of consumption throughout all important capitalist countries during 1932. The crisis, developing irregularly, has hit the production of means of production hardest of all. In the largest imperialist countries production of means of consumption has fallen far more slowly than that of means of production. The food industry in the U.S.A. decreased in volume of production as compared with its apex in 1919 only 4.9 per cent. by December, 1931. The general index of production in Germany dropped to 56.1 per cent. between 1928 and January, 1932, production of means of production to 44.3 per cent. and the production of means of consumption only to 76.6 per cent. The footwear industry in the U.S.A. decreased its output 47.4 per cent. by the end of 1931, and in Germany, 36.6 per cent. The decrease from the zenith reached in 1929 for the textile industry of the U.S.A. was 29.3 per cent., for England 14.2 per cent., France 39.2 per cent., Poland 47.9 per cent., by 1931; the woollen mills of the U.S.A. experienced a fall in production of 46.7 per cent., France 23.4 per cent; the silk industry in the U.S.A. 18.9 per cent., England 16.8 per cent., Japan 15.6 per cent. In 1932, however, the leading imperialist lands also suffered a heavy drop in the production of means of consumption. The impoverishment of the masses hastened the development of the crisis in these branches.

4. Every hope for stabilisation of prices was completely dissipated. The general price level still reveals a tendency to drop. At the same time the price policy of monopolistic corporations and financial oligarchies has caused the scissor blades* not merely not to close but to spread even further apart. Monopolistic capitalism has created and the crisis has opened at least five different scissor blades; the scissors between the monopoly of prices and the prices of branches of industry not included in cartels; the scissors between prices of manufactured goods and agricultural and colonial produce; the scissors between high monopoly prices on the home market and dumping prices for foreign markets; scissors between wholesale and retail prices and lastly the scissors between monopolistic high selling prices and low purchasing prices. The latter requires some explanation. Monopolistic corporations pursue a policy of establishing high monopoly prices and this is generally accepted as representing the policy of monopoly prices. However, it is only one side of the medal. Simultaneously the cartels, trusts, syndicates and concerns are straining every effort to purchase needed raw materials at low monopoly prices. Moreover, the financial crisis resulted in the formation of a series of monopolistic corporations in the field of trading, which sought to purchase various goods at low prices, from the producers, and dispose of them, to the consumer, at high prices. The Standard Oil Company purchases oil at low monopoly prices from "independent" producers, and, after refining, it seeks to sell oil products at high monopoly prices. When the English and Dutch trusts merged and formed a single trust, — Unilever, — prices of oil seeds dropped, on an average of 27 per cent., because Unilever systematically began to force purchase prices down. This did not hinder them from

*Scissors—discrepancy.—Ed.

selling soap, margarine, perfume, etc., at high monopoly prices however. It is well known that almost all world trade in grain is concentrated in the hands of four concerns, and that these concerns make every effort to force down prices at the place of purchase. A "pool" was organised in the U.S.A. for the purpose of purchasing rubber. This pool took advantage of the competition existing between English and Dutch planters, between plantation and peasant production. It not only destroyed all efforts to establish high monopoly prices on rubber, but is successfully carrying through the establishment of low monopoly prices. Trade monopolists in Japan strain every effort to purchase silk cocoons at low monopoly prices. Simultaneously, the banks, exporters and government strive their utmost to raise the purchase price of raw silk. However, the U.S.A., the largest consumer, formed a pool which seeks to establish low prices for the purchase of raw silk. In South American countries —the whole policy of the railroad companies, and monopoly owners of slaughter-house cold-storage plants is directed towards acquiring cattle at low monopoly prices. At the same time they attempt to sell cold-storage meat at high monopoly prices. In various other countries the monopolistic trading corporations have expanded to an almost fantastic degree. Hungary has over 1,200 trading-purchasing cartels which establish low monopoly prices on all agricultural products. Bulgaria, Rumania, Greece, Turkey, etc., are in exactly the same position.

However, let us return to the scissors. The crisis has widened the scissors. No hopes remain that the disproportion between prices will diminish or be regulated. Contrariwise, this disproportion continues to grow, which means that monopolistic corporations plunder branches of industry which have no cartels, agriculture and agrarian and colonial countries. It means that the peasantry sells its products at low monopoly prices and purchases manufactured goods at high monopoly prices. It means that monopoly corporations, at the expense of robbing the home market by high monopoly prices, follow a policy of dumping prices on foreign markets. It means that the decline in wholesale prices is not accompanied by a corresponding drop in retail prices incidentally because the number of cartel agreements is spreading and increasing in the retail field. (Germany has about 33,000 cartel agreements in retail trade.) This, in turn, means that the worker, toiling peasant, petty bourgeois and other consumers suffer the full brunt of the crisis, that the decrease in wholesale prices hardly affects them at all.

5. The *credit crisis* which developed throughout the summer of last year has become universal. An evergrowing number of countries have stopped payment on their foreign debts, including therein state, commercial and private debts. Bankruptcies have affected large individual banks and have not spared the largest banks and trusts. In Austria the "Kreditanstalt," in Germany the "Danatbank," Dresden Bank and Nordwall," in France the Bank of National Credit, Italy, Banca Commerciale, the Trans-American Corporation, Lee Higginson and Co., Insuli, in the U.S.A., the Kreuger smash-up, the crisis of the Deterding concern all signalise that some of the most formidable strongholds of financial capital have also fallen victims to the crisis. The majority of the South-American and Balkan countries are virtually bankrupt. Germany, Austria, Hungary and Greece have also ceased payments on their debts. A partial moratorium has been declared in a number of countries. Discount rates have been lowered again, many countries, including the U.S.A. are pursuing a policy of expanding credits. This has failed, however, to prevent the maturing of the credit crisis. The world market of capital has been completely shot to pieces. Export of capital from the U.S.A., England, France, Switzerland, Holland and Belgium is almost at a complete standstill. During the first quarter of 1932 no capital was exported from the U.S.A. None but military-political loans are granted by individual imperialist countries. Long term credit is almost completely discontinued. Yet the world market of capital has about 50 billion marks, short term credits, searching for speculative investment.

6. At the present stage, when the economy of capitalist countries is subordinate to finance capital, at the present stage of development of the rôle of credit the crisis has created its peculiar blind alley in credit relations in general. Separate countries are in a position to meet their debts solely through export of commodities, service, gold, by selling part of their property, exporting labour, or by obtaining new loans, all of which, however, only postpones, but fails to solve the problem. The debtor countries have no gold. Sale of part of their property, bonds, securities fails to solve the problem, for profits have to be paid on enterprises disposed of, dividends or interest must be declared on bonds and securities. As a rule, new loans are not granted during a credit crisis. The chief means of debt payments is by exporting goods. Yet this is the hitch, for world trade, measured in value, has dropped over one half, and prices have fallen. Particularly is this so with regard to agricultural products from colonial and dependent countries—which are the chief item of their export. Nearly all the debtor

countries, excepting Germany and Austria, pay their debts, in the main, by exporting agricultural products and raw materials. The point is that prices on agricultural products and colonial raw goods have dropped more than other prices. If debts are to be met by exporting wheat, coffee, cotton, wool, jute, rubber, copper, lead, etc., it is essential to export double or treble the amount of these goods. The debts, however, remain unaffected, while prices have dropped to half or one-third. This is the reason for the dead-lock in inter-state credit relations. The same fact permits creditor lands to tighten their debt noose on the debtor lands. Former debts, declining prices, diminished trade form a chain of new contradictions. Moreover, the credit lands do not permit the debtor lands to declare themselves bankrupt, thereby shaking off at least part of their debts. They give them no opportunity to live — but their death is prohibited — this is the fate of countries dependent on rentier states.

Internal credit relations which have developed in separate countries have created an even more confused condition. The banks and monopolies have attempted to preserve enterprises dependent on them, enterprises in which they hold interests by warrant of invested capital, by extending such enterprises credits. But the point is that the burden of debts at a time of crisis, depreciation of capital, complications arising from disposing of production, the price decline, have become unbearable. After the war agriculture annulled its hypothecary (mortgage) debts in most countries. The landlord and kulak came out debt free. Naturally the poor and middle peasant were not relieved of usurious debts. During the stabilisation period practically everywhere the pre-war level was reached as far as hypothetic debts were concerned. Prices on agricultural produce however, dropped 48.2 per cent. in the U.S.A., 30.9 per cent. in England and 29.4 per cent. in Germany. These are mean prices. Wheat dropped 62.5 per cent., cotton 49.4 per cent., wool 57 per cent., etc. How is it possible to pay old debts at current prices? Industry wiped out its debts in a number of countries, or met them to a considerable degree, during the period of post-war inflation. At the present time the debts of industry absolutely and relatively, considerably exceed the pre-war -debt level. Manufactured goods have dropped on the average 27.4 per cent. in the U.S.A., 24.2 per cent. in England, 17.9 per cent. in Germany. Debts remain stationary. Production has diminished to half and prices on manufactured goods have dropped 20-30-40 per cent.

A deadlock (for which it is most difficult to find a solution) arises at the present stage of economy's dependence on finance capital, at the present stage of development of the rôle of the banks.

7. The collapse of the unified world currency system is a new factor in the development of the crisis. This process had commenced even earlier. The money units of a number of South-American countries, Spain, Turkey, Yugo-Slavia, Rumania have become valueless. What great havoc China, India, Persia and Abysinnia suffered in consequence of the devaluation of silver is well known. However, in September last year the gold standard was revoked in England; Japan followed suit. The Scandinavian countries, Australia, Canada, Portugal and India also depreciated their currency. At that time a number of countries like Germany, Hungary, Austria supported their rate of exchange exclusively by administrative measures and interdictions. Actually to-day the gold standard is maintained only by the U.S.A., France, Holland, Belgium, Switzerland and very relatively by Italy. England, Japan and forty other capitalist lands have suffered a varying money devaluation. Germany, Hungary, Austria, etc., still maintain the gold standard, but merely formally. Countries with a silver currency such as China, India, etc., have been dealt a new crushing blow as a result of the new silver devaluation, which occurred during the summer of 1932.

8. The frenzied struggle for markets, raw material sources, economic territory, inflation, as means of fighting for foreign markets, the struggle for gold and its redistribution, the intensification of dumping, embittered struggle for an active trade and payment balance, the tariff war, administrative and currency measures, decrease in goods turnover and price decline have occasioned an enormous diminishing of world trade. At the present time world trade is *less than half what it was in* 1929. The unity of the world market of commodities has been ruptured.

We have limited ourselves here to an economic summary, temporarily desisting from discussing its social consequences. Yet these are gloomy enough from the standpoint of capitalism.

3.—ON THE PECULIARITIES AND SPECIFIC FEATURES OF THE CRISIS.

The outstanding feature of the present crisis lies in the fact that its course is being run in a condition of a general crisis of capitalism. The present crisis is a crisis at a definite level of development of monopolist capitalism. The peculiarities and special features in the development of the crisis are determined by the existing state of monopolistic development, the present stage subjection of all economy to finance capital, the present rôle of the financial oligarchy in economy and its policies.

We hold the opinion that even many Communists devote too little consideration to just these these factors. Politicians, economists, ideologists of the bourgeoisie and Social-Democracy to-day already "recognise" the crisis but they seek in every way to portray it as a sort of elemental outburst, as a "normal" crisis of capitalism. Obviously capitalism cannot exist without crises. But the depth and sharpness of the present crisis, its painful-drawn out festering and protraction are determined by the policy of monopolist mergers, the policy of the financial obligarchy, and the policy of bourgeois governments.

1. Monopolist mergers, and the financial oligarchy control levers which enable them to find ways to maintain their position despite a decreased production. Never before in the history of crises has decreased production which is synonomous with unemployment, attained such gigantic, unprecedented scope as at the present. Even the quite plausible gentlemen from the League of Nations admit this.

Iron smelting in the six most important countries (England, France, Germany, Belgium, Sweden, the U.S.A.), dropped as follows during previous crises: 8 per cent. in 1873-1874, 10 per cent. in 1883-1885, 6.5 per cent. in 1890-1892. During the crisis of 1900-01 the decrease covered 0.25 per cent. In the crisis of 1907-08 the drop was expressed by 23 per cent. and in the crisis of 1920-21 it amounted to 40 per cent. whereas to-day it exceeds 60 per cent. The production drop, due to the crisis becomes extremely great during the period of imperialism, the period of monopolistic capitalism. One cannot fail to be struck by the fact that in the period of general crisis of capitalism, the crisis drop becomes even greater.

Imports of cotton to England decreased 6 per cent. during 1873-75, 8 per cent. during 1884-85, 38 per cent. during 1907-08 and 42 per cent. during 1920-21.

No end of figures could be quoted which confirm the premise that the development of monopoly leads to a constantly growing decrease in production during a crisis period. Crises during the period of industrial capitalism have invariably been accompanied by a sharper drop in prices and less restriction in production. Now in those branches where monopoly is strongest we have the greatest contraction of production and the least decline in prices. In consequence, the working class is the victim of an unprecedented rise of unemployment and impoverishment.

2. Parallel to this monopolist trusts and finance capital strain every nerve to maintain monopoly prices, or at any rate to prevent their fall by establishing goods reserves. It suffices to mention that the wheat reserves in 1921 covered 10.2 million and in 1930, 19 million tons. Sugar reserves in 1913 totalled 1,279,000 tons and 3,216,000 tons in 1930; the coffee reserve was 1.2 million sacks in 1913 and 21.2 million sacks in 1930. A similar state of affairs is found with regard to the reserves of cotton, lead, tin, copper, rubber, silk, coal, etc. Large stocks of goods failed to prevent a drop in prices; on the contrary, these tremendous reserves are a burden to the market, affect prices and prevent their rising.

3. The gigantic concentration of capital whose scope has now become that of a monopoly, is determined by a third peculiarity of the crisis, tremendously vital from the angle of production costs. The organic composition of capital has grown hugely. Yet a tremendous share of production machinery now lies idle. Inasmuch as this frozen section of capital belongs to monopolies it demands profit. At the present stage of concentration of capital, the existing centralised production, the present level of development of monopolies, the operation of plants at full capacity is essential for low costs of production. At a time of crisis, a condition in which an enterprise is not fully exploited, the discontinuance of mass production and mass sales are factors which have the opposite effect, adding to the production cost per goods unit. Schmallenbach, the bourgeois economist, draws attention to the growing rôle of so-called "fixed" charges in the economy of monopolist capitalism, whether it operates at full capacity or not, obligations have to be met, dividends declared, taxes paid, the management must be retained, part of the basic capital be written off, etc. All these fixed charges are included in the production cost, and when mass production is discontinued production cost per unit naturally increases considerably. Another by no means unimportant fact must also be reckoned with—the over-capitalising of undertakings, under the conditions of monopolist capitalism. A concrete example is given as an illustration: the actual value of all the mills and enterprises of the United State Steel Corporation, is somewhere between 430 to 600 million dollars. In expectation of monopoly profits the promoters of the Steel Trust fixed the basic capital at 1,500,000,000 dollars, and stock was issued to that sum. The difference between the actual value of the undertaking, and the watered share capital was pocketed by the promoters. As long as business prospered monopoly prices guaranteed high monopoly profits even for the watered capital. However, at the present time the steel

trust enterprises are running at only 12-15 per per cent. capacity. At most, a capital valued at 90,000,000 dollars is being utilised. Dividends however, must be paid on share capital of 1,500 million dollars. A similar picture is observed in the German Steel Mill merger and other large concerns and trusts of monopolistic capitalism. Under free competition, dead enterprises would have gone bankrupt, and had no share in the distribution of profits. Under the conditions of monopolistic capitalism the financial obligarchy does its utmost to guarantee its profits as a monopoly even for the dead (frozen) share of capital. These efforts are naturally not invariably crowned with success, and the decrease in mass profit has already reached a state when large trusts, and even the biggest trusts and concerns are unable to declare dividends.

Further, it must be taken into account that under the conditions of monopolist capitalism, monopoly combines expend tremendous sums in the effort to maintain their monopoly status. The German Potassium Cartel spent about 2,000 million marks to eliminate outsiders. These "expenditures" also burden production and are included in the price set on goods. The German Cement Cartel bought out all outsiders to guarantee its share in distribution. It thus happened that even during the period of the zenith of economic prosperity the cement cartel could utilise only 30-35 per cent. of its production equipment. However, prices were established so that monopoly super-profit was gained on the entire capital. Society was forced to pay tribute to the big-guns of monopolist capitalism.

The question of cartel prices arises in this connection. Production prices under conditions of free competition equal production cost plus the average profit. Furthermore, the production cost is regulated by such costs during normal conditions. Competition sees to it that the production cost is established by the cost of the manufactured article, produced by capital of average organic composition. However, cartels include enterprises with varying organic composition of capital. The pre-condition to a cartel organisation is receipt of average profits by the enterprise having the poorest organic capital composition. Cartel prices equal cost of production of the worst enterprise plus average profit. The remaining enterprises with the best organic capital composition receive cartel, i.e., monopolv *super*-profits. It must also be borne in mind, that, under free competition, should the market be overstocked, its prices are regulated by the part of goods purchased under the most favourable conditions. This was what prevented a sharp decline in prices during crisis in the period of unrestricted competition. Market prices of commodities of branches of industry organised into cartels are, under a condition of monopolist capitalism, regulated by the share of goods manufactured under the least favourable conditions.

We thus see that no matter whether it be a question of trusts, concerns or cartels, a decrease in production costs encounters serious obstacles which monopolist capitalism itself advances.

4. The striving to preserve monopolist superproht by means of a policy of monopoly prices is also added. Restriction in production, holding goods reserves back, shifting of tax burdens, the tariff policy, national and international agreements, every method and means available are used as levers to attain this goal. Wage deductions however are the chief means employed. We have already pointed out that "scissors" are a result of the price policy pursued by monopoly mergers. The broadening out of the scissors means that monopolised branches get the share of profits of non-monopolised branches, accelerate the ruin of the peasantry, the petty bourgeoisie, agrarian and colonial countries. First and foremost it hastens the process of impoverisation of the working class. But thereby the home market shrinks as does the foreign market and in consequence of the frenzied struggle for monopolist profits, monopoly mergers collapse, cartels break up, national and international agreements on prices, decreased production, partition of markets, export quotas, etc., etc., are dissolved.

5. Monopoly Trusts and large banks attempt to save from bankruptcy enterprises in which they are in one or another way interested. These attempts are not always successful. The bankruptcy of individual large banks, trusts and concerns graphically shows that the deadweight of so many bankrupt enterprises was able to drag down giants of financial capital with it. At the same time the crisis furnishes a rarely favourable condition for further concentration of capital, for buying up bankrupt enterprises, for purchase of shares which have dropped, to fuse various enterprises, to force the weaker and middle-size enterprises under the heel of financial capital, etc. This process is still more hastened by the fact, that during a credit crisis, the weak and middle size enterprises obtain no credit, while the larger and most important banks, concerns and trusts get additional credits.

6. The present crisis has, with extraordinary clarity and force, revealed the real, commanding rôle of the financial oligarchy. Lenin's teachings on the financial oligarchy are daily confirmed by the actual progress of the crisis.

His teachings on the inter-relation between the state power and the financial oligarchy are most graphically and convincingly confirmed. To preserve or strengthen individual groups of the financial oligarchy, the biggest banks, trusts and concerns, bourgeois governments stop at nothing. The "restoration" of the Rothschild Bank in Austria, of the D Banks in Germany, the salvation of the largest ship-building companies by the government, purchase of all the shares of the United Steel Mills by the German Government, the "restoration" of the Bank of National Credit by the French Government, the "reorganisation" of the Banca Commerciale of Italy are but several instances of the plundering of vast state means for the purpose of saving individual groups of the financial oligarchy.

The restoration of the D Banks alone cost the German government 800,000,000 marks. The Federal Bank statutes in the U.S.A. were altered in the interests of the largest banks and trusts, the "Reconstruction Finance Corporation" was organised, state credit and the stability of the dollar were subjected to risk. The buying up of shares, free credit, state decrees, participation in corporation capital, credit guarantees, taxes, tariffs and other privileges, direct subsidies, transfer of losses to the account of the state budget were the outstanding means of wasting government funds by individual groups of the financial oligarchy. Naturally a bitter, competitive struggle is waged within the financial oligarchy for the sharing of the state pickings. One can hardly completely comprehend the present situation in Germany without giving consideration to this struggle between various groups of the financial oligarchy. Inflation in the interests of certain groups of capitalists and landlords was even resorted to on several occasions, or, at any rate, they used inflation in order to enrich themselves. Such measures on the part of bourgeois governments are denominated as "state capitalism" by Social-Democracy. However, measures of this kind, engineered by bourgeois governments, in the interests of individual groups of the financial oligarchy heavily burden the state budget, already disturbed, draw the emission banks into the vortex of crisis, subject state credits to further risk, place new tax burdens on the toilers, the workers to begin with, and aggravate the crisis of capitalist economy as a whole.

Solution of the crisis was sought during the period of free competition by diminishing production, price reduction, depreciation of basic capital, a similar depreciation of fictitious capital, wage reductions, destruction and squandering of goods reserves, renewal of the basic capital, purging economy of weak, decayed enterprises, and decreasing the cost of production. Monopolist capitalism introduced a number of very significant features and peculiarities into the movement of the crisis, vitally affecting its development. We note that during the maturing of the crisis, a number of contradictions themselves stimulating it (the crisis) have been aggravgated.

Three years of crisis without any automatic, smooth, peaceful-calm, mechanical solution way out of it.

Three years of crisis and no automatic, mechanically approaching, fatalist, certain collapse of capitalism.

Hopes for the automatic collapse of capitalism have also been destroyed. Such were the hopes with which the Social-Democrats and right opportunists consoled themselves.

Hopes for an automatic solution for capitalism in the crisis have also vanished. They were the hopes with which the "left" opportunists deluded themselves.

If this be the case; the question becomes even more acute and pressing: Where are we? Where is the capitalist world at? In what direction is the crisis developing? What outlook is there for its development?

4.—ECONOMIC SUMMARY OF THE CRISIS.

The economic result of the period of a relative, temporary stabilisation of capitalism expressed itself by growth in the physical volume of industrial production, in the development of means of production and technical improvements, the restoration of agriculture, establishment of a unified world market of commodities and capital, in the formation of a unified world money system.

The world economic crisis wiped out, made dust of the chief victories won by the temporary stabilisation of capitalism. Taking the most important types of raw materials — coal, iron, steel and oil—one sees that the physical volume of production at the end of 1931, oil excepted, was at a level below that of pre-war and even less than that of 1920. Coal extracted in 1931 totalled in all capitalist countries of the world 1,344 million, in 1920 1,300 million and in 1931 1,012 million tons. Smelted iron totalled 78 million tons in 1913, 61 million in 1920 and 50.7 million tons in 1931. Steel produced in 1913 registered 75 million tons, 68 million in 1920 and 63.8 million tons in 1931. Oil extracted in 1931 amounted to 50 million, in 1920 to 90 million and 1931 to 145 million tons. Oil excepted, other forms of basic raw material not only fell below the 1931 level but below that of 1920. World capitalist production as a whole has been hurled back below pre-war level.

Production forces, which developed during the

stabilisation period, are dead to a large extent. Technical progress has been halted.

In agriculture the physical volume of production for the basic crops,—wheat, rice, rye, maize, potatoes, sugar cane and sugar beet, coffee, cotton, tea, rubber, jute,—still exceed the pre-war level and more so that of 1920. However it is just this that makes the agrarian crisis so serious and destructive.

The unity of the world commodity market has been punctured. The decrease in world trade has reached an unprecedented level, both absolutely and relatively. During the crisis of 1873-74 world trade decreased 5 per cent., in 1883-84 4 per cent., 1890-91 it increased 0.5 per cent., in 1900-01 only dropped 1 per cent., during 1907-08 the decline was 7 per cent., while during the crisis of 1929-32, world trade suffered a 50 per cent. drop. Parallel to this the unity of the market of world capital has been ruptured. Export of capital is practically at a standstill. The credit system of the capitalist world has been seriously disturbed.

The unity of the world monetary system has also been rocked. Few countries have retained the gold standard which exists formally only, in many lands. England, Japan and forty other countries are experiencing a depreciation of money. Silver is rapidly falling in value.

Simultaneously, output in the U.S.S.R. has increased, production forces have grown, collectivisation has been carried out, Socialism is winning great victories.

Such are the *fundamental economic conclusions. They indicate that the economic world crisis has destroyed the gains of a temporary relative capitalist stabilisation.* It indicates that the capitalist world *no longer has stabilisation* as far as economic relations are concerned. *There is not even a temporary, relative, decayed, shaky stabilisation. This can also be said regarding the international and internal political relations. But this requires a special article.*

THE CURRENT LINK OF THE MASS WORK OF THE COMMUNIST PARTIES*

By M. Yablonsky.

WHY is the question of bringing the masses, who are frequently still unprepared for effective revolutionary action, who have not yet fully realised the necessity of such action, to *decisive revolutionary battles,* the most burning and important question for the further development of the revolutionary upsurge at the present time? Why does only this question, and the Bolshevist reply to it, provide the key to a thoroughly concrete and real enforcement of the united front tactic from below?

This is due primarily to the given historical situation, to the specific character of the present moment which may be deciphered as a transition to *a new series of wars and revolutions.* All the effects of the economic crisis, which have been tremendously sharpened during the last year; the merciless attack upon wages, unemployment, the agrarian crisis, the immediate threat of a world imperialist war and intervention, the growth of indignation and spirit of revolt among the masses have already resulted in *the general crisis of capitalism* rising *to a higher stage.* The revolutionary upsurge, predicted by the VI Congress, and clearly analysed in its basic outline by the subsequent plenums (X and XI) of the E.C.C.I. has now reached such a quantitative swing and such internal tension that sharp turns, sudden "explosions" and upheavals have become not only probable, but inevitable in the immediate future. However, all this development proceeds unevenly in the different countries, and is characterised even within them by *spasmodic* development, which is precisely suggestive of a pre-revolutionary phase, of a still immature, or not quite mature, revolutionary situation. At the present time, antagonistic forces are increasingly coming into motion practically throughout the world, but the forces of the revolutionary camp have not yet taken shape, have not *yet moved into the open field* as it were; the millions of workers and toilers have not yet formed a single, organisational and political front under the leadership of the Communist Party, and the class enemy *still* maintains the initiative and even continues his offensive.

One who has carefully watched the development of the class battles in the different countries during the last year, not only in France, the United States, England, Scandinavia, etc., but also in the countries with more revolutionary

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tension, such as Bulgaria, Czecho-Slovakia and even Poland, must conclude that the "sudden" sharp class battles are followed by a certain "lull" in all these countries, marking a further hidden, sometimes slow, and sometimes speedy, polarisation of the class forces. This strengthens the unevenness of the revolutionary upsurge. A certain exception among the European countries is developing, by Germany where the elements of civil war have been clearly and *openly growing* from day to day, and in the colonies by China, where the revolutionary movement has been steadily growing at an ever accelerating tempo, as is strikingly revealed by the victories of the Soviet regions. Thus, the present transitional phase in the development of the class struggle creates *specific* objective conditions in the different links of the imperialist chain for the further growth of the revolutionary upsurge, for its rise to a new, higher stage. This spasmodic development of events is necessarily supplemented by sharp shifts, by stormy outbreaks of the class struggle, when new deep layers of revolutionised masses of the working class are "suddenly" hurled to the top with volcanic force. A most striking example of this characteristic phenomenon has lately been furnished by the heroic strike of the Belgian miners, which clearly revealed how much rebellion, and how many new revolutionary forces have accumulated among the working class recently.

In close relation to this is *the subjective factor of the revolutionising* of the working class, and other exploited non-proletarian sections of the population, which is highly indicative of the present situation. Of course, in the countries which were afflicted by the crisis during its later stages (for instance, France), and in the countries in which the crisis caused very deep and lengthy upheavals, but where the revolutionary traditions and the Communist Parties are weak (England and the United States), the revolutionising of the masses has been developing at an entirely different tempo, and with other qualitative characteristics than in the weakest links of imperialism, which are threatened by economic ruin, and have a powerful revolutionary proletariat (Germany, Poland). For this reason the question of the social-political effects of the crisis, and the degree of revolutionisation of the working class must be regarded quite concretely, with a view to the peculiar "circumstances" of the different countries, with a most careful consideration of the class relationships *of all the classes without exception*, of the revolutionary experience of the working masses, of the degree of organisation and consciousness of the Communist Parties, etc. This is unquestionably an elementary truism, but unfortunately it is one which has been completely neglected in the mass practice of our Communist Parties. For instance, how often some of our comrades are inclined to mechanically apply to France, England, the United States, etc., such tactical measures, such methods and forms of organisation which are quite natural in countries such as Germany and Poland. Thus, on the questions of the struggle against the political reaction and fascisation, on the questions of trade union work, of exposing their "own" Social-Democratic leaders, etc., some comrades proceed as a rule on the theory that the social-political effects of the crisis are everywhere the same, that bourgeois democracy everywhere is moving towards Fascism, that the coalescence between the reformist trade-union leadership and the bourgeois State has the same features everywhere, that the Social-Fascist manœuvres of the French Blums do not in any way differ from the Social-Fascist practices of Severing, that the "left" Social-Democrats, for instance, the English Maxtons and the American Musts resemble the Bauers and Seidewitzes like two rotten eggs. All this is "essentially," *a la longue*, that is, in the long run, true, it corresponds to the historical perspective of Social-Fascism, but this in no way corresponds to the demands of the *given moment*, and the different methods of violence and deceit applied by the exploiting classes and their Social-Fascist agents. This is incorrect to the extent that the masses following the reformists (and in some countries they even constitute a majority of the organised workers) have not yet learned through their own experience (due in part to the inefficient approach of the Communist Party to these questions of *concrete exposure* of the Social-Fascist leaders) the truth of such a general and frequently stereotyped characterisation of the treacheries of Social-Fascism.

The mistakes of such mechanical application of tactical measures, slogans, methods and contents of agitation "regardless of time and space" are the more injurious, the less our Communist Parties take into account the given level, and concrete contents of the revolutionisation of the masses, in the various countries and different class battles. Despite the fact that, in *the long run*, the radicalising masses must, and undoubtedly, will come to the same revolutionary positions of fearless support of the Communists, and the adoption of the Bolshevist principles of the revolutionary struggle, the *entire road* by which the masses will travel to the decisive revolutionary battles, against the class enemy, is extremely diversified, and cannot be confined to any stereotyped framework.

It is necessary to definitely realise that, under

the influence of the Communist Party, and precisely thanks to this influence, to a greater or lesser extent, new hundreds of thousands, and in some countries even *millions* and *tens of millions* of hitherto "ordinary, inert masses unawakened to active political life" are already being pushed into politics and into the political movement. This undoubtedly is the peculiar general consequence of the crisis. The new masses of the working class entering on the political arena, especially the most oppressed sections among them (for instance the farm workers, textile workers, day labourers, women, young workers, etc.) bring with them an inexhaustible supply of revolutionary strength, readiness and courage for the decisive battle, as well as their "prejudices," many weaknesses in the sense of revolutionary consciousness, organisational experience and ability for conscious mass actions. The question of *speeding up* the political and organisational work of the Communist Parties connected with the "drafting" of *these masses* into the struggle therefore gains special importance. Upon the decision of this question in the practice of the class struggle, that is through the experience of the struggling masses themselves, depends the possibility of leading them to new positions *where the formation of a mass political army under the leadership of the Communist Party, under the leadership of the revolutionary vanguard will make them capable of decisive revolutionary battles.*

Such is the *present link* of the mass work of the Communist Parties, the entire task of which consists, precisely in forming a mass political army under the leadership of the Communist Party.

For this reason the raising of the question of the revolutionary re-making of the masses in the course of the struggle, of bringing them, or, if we may say so, of "introducing" them into the phase of sharp class battles and decisive struggles, does not in any way represent any underestimation of the *objective growth* of the revolutionary upsurge. On the contrary, it emphasises the fact that the revolutionary upsurge rises by the entire "course of things," to a higher stage, and that the entire task consists in bringing the revolutionary readiness and ability of the masses, into accord with the *objective* situation. Precisely for this reason, must the emphasis be placed now upon the revolutionising influence of the Communist Party upon the masses, upon the concretisation of their tasks in this respect, upon the most careful check of all the tactical measures of the Communist Party connected with the creation of revolutionary unity from below, *with mass work in the factories, in the trade unions and among the unemployed.* Therefore, the question of a *real turn towards the masses* now becomes a burning question; therefore, real connections with the masses, a study of all the questions agitating them constitutes in the same measure, a basis for the exercise of the united front policy as the consciousness, the organisation and the ability of the Communist Party to utilise "every pretext" for unleashing mass movements and mass battles.

This naturally presupposes a merciless struggle against all the bombastic and trite phrases such as the talk of a "general strike" as the only panacea for the further development of the revolutionary battles, etc. This also presupposes a radical change in the attitude of the Communists towards the reformist working masses, the demolition of that "Chinese wall" which only too frequently stands between the Communist and reformist workers, and is deliberately kept up by the manœuvres of the Social-Fascist leaders.

But this also requires a truly Bolshevist, concrete and active approach to the deep, sometimes subterranean shifts in the sentiments of the working and exploited masses generally caused by the hardships of the crisis. For instance, it is quite clear that in the majority of capitalist countries ever greater masses are becoming "puzzled" by the duration and gravity of the economic crisis, that they are increasingly arriving at a realisation of the necessity of a determined struggle against the capitalist offensive, unemployment, reaction, etc. This has resulted in the almost universal spontaneous tendency of the *workers to create the united front.* This is one of the characteristic features of the growth of the spontaneous mass revolutionary movement. In the course of the battles, the masses are themselves beginning to check up the different methods and forms of these battles, to compare the methods of the reformists with those of the Communists, are beginning also to ponder the course travelled since the imperialist war, the partial stabilisation, rationalisation, etc., and to draw practical conclusions from it for their every-day struggle.

But while in countries such as Germany and Poland the process of "grasping the realities and growing conscious" (to use Marx's expression) is becoming a question of struggle against the capitalist system as a whole, a question of class struggle for life and death, not only to the revolutionary vanguard but also to the great masses of reformist and non-party workers, in the other, more backward countries, from a revolutionary point of view, this degree of revolutionisation is still far from having been achieved. In some countries, such as France and England, not only the great masses, but even the revolutionary van-

guard itself, still regards the crisis and its social-political consequences as something temporary, "transient," and this breeds reformist illusions as to the peaceful solution of the crisis, strengthens the hesitation of the masses in the employment of new revolutionary means and forms of struggle, retards their break with the Social-Democracy and approach to the Communist vanguard, etc. This also largely facilitates the manœuvres of the bourgeoisie, and its Social-Fascist agents, who seek by all means to prevent the creation of the united front of the class struggle from below, to isolate and defeat the different fighting detachments of the working class separately, to isolate the revolutionary proletariat from the non-proletarian toiling masses rising for the struggle, primarily from the peasantry, etc.

For this reason the revolutionary re-education of the masses (which can be secured *only in the process of the class struggle*) based upon the fighting experience of the masses themselves, must be in harmony with the given stage and level of the radicalisation of the masses and their class consciousness. But under no circumstances must it stop there. On the contrary, it must from the very beginning accustom the masses to revolutionary actions and revolutionary forms of organisation and agitation, at the present transitional stage. The Communist Parties must lead the masses, "clinging" to their every-day needs and demands, they must popularise concrete tactical and organisational measures of Bolshevist struggle among the masses, combining the partial battles with the ultimate aims of the revolutionary solution of the crisis, and the struggle for power, and the principles of Communism, the *struggle for the dictatorship of the proletariat,* and the Soviet power.

From this point of view, we can clearly define also the task of the struggle on two fronts, against the right opportunists as the main danger attempting to cover up their capitulationism before the bourgeoisie and Social-Fascism, and their distrust for the possibility of revolutionising the reformist and indifferent masses by talk to the effect that "the masses do not want to fight," and against the "left" talkers who re-echo them and put their hopes upon a spontaneous mass movement and who seek to "jump over" the difficulties of the given objective situation, and the difficulties of the revolutionary education of the masses. In reality both the one and the other are actuated by distrust in the forces of the proletariat and in the forces of its revolutionary vanguard, by the belief that the proletarian masses are unable at the present time to join hands in the struggle under the leadership of the Communist Party and to carry on their class battles in a united front. The Bolshevist position, on the contrary, consists precisely in promoting the revolutionisation of the masses in accordance with the rapid objective development of events, by bringing out the entire revolutionary energy contained in the working class, by drawing the masses into the struggle and teaching them the revolutionary methods of struggle even though a revolutionary situation does not yet exist.

For this reason the application of the united front policy from below, this main lever and basic form of joint struggle of the revolutionary vanguard and still unrevolutionary masses, particularly the reformist workers, represents at the present transitional stage a difficult but highly important task. The Communists must actually demonstrate before the masses that they are the most fearless, the wisest and most capable defenders of their interests, both *immediate* and *future.*

Precisely the present historical situation requires from the Communist Parties special observance of those most important rules of Bolshevist policy, those examples of Bolshevist tactics in the exercise of the united front policy which Comrade Stalin noted in his analysis of the "Roads to October": namely, the capture by the Bolsheviks of undivided leadership of the movement, on the basis of the spontaneous uprise of the revolutionary movement, and the maintenance of this leadership. This requires that *the Communists should become true leaders of the masses.* In this way, and in this way only, will the Communists, with the aid of the spontaneous rise of the movement, capture in the process of the struggle itself, and preserve the undivided, independent leadership of the mass movement at all of its stages, in all of its forms *pressing back step by step, and destroying the ideological influence and the organisational positions of reformism among the working class.*

The task of leading the masses to the decisive battles which is placed on the order of the day by the approaching new series of wars and revolutions requires from the Communist Parties a most careful analysis and immediate elimination of the fundamental *defects and mistakes* which have been committed in the application of the *united front tactic from below.* These defects and mistakes are grouped along those most important lines which determine the very essence and leading rôle of the revolutionary vanguard, namely, its connection with the masses, its determination and organisation, its ability to utilise every pretext for a struggle, its consciousness, that is its ability to appreciate the current situation and the tendencies of its development. Only provided these defects and mistakes are

overcome will our Communist Parties prove equal to their tasks in the approaching historical class battles, only then will they succeed under the conditions of the "greatest revolutionary crisis" which is approaching with every passing day, in fulfilling the following task raised by Lenin: "It is necessary now to *prove* by the work of the revolutionary Parties that they have sufficient consciousness, organisation, contact with the exploited masses, determination and ability to utilise this crisis for a successful victorious revolution."

COMRADE YABLONSKY'S THEORY AND TACTICS OF SPONTANEITY

By Al. Grunberg and Vl. Kuchumov.

COMRADE Yablonsky has given us in his article on "The Current Link of the Mass work of the Communist Parties" more than he promised in its title; he has given, in a certain sense, an integral statement of the fundamental tactical problems of the sections of the Communist International for the current phase of the general crisis of capitalism and the revolutionary upsurge of the masses.

We will explain later the sense in which the author's article represents an integral system of views.

ESTIMATE OF THE POLITICAL MOMENT.

Comrade Yablonsky accepts, in words, the general formula that the end of capitalist stabilisation has now arrived, and a transition is proceeding towards a new round of wars and revolutions, that the proletariat is now preparing for decisive battles. In "deepening" the question, however, Comrade Yablonsky has written an article as if in refutation of this formula.

The first thing that must be noted is that the author lowers the level of the revolutionary movement attained by the proletariat, that he exaggerates the spontaneity of the revolutionary process and sharply belittles the rôle of the Communist vanguard, in the developing struggles of the proletariat, and the toiling masses of peasantry.

Let us give the actual statements of Comrade Yablonsky on this account:

"One who has carefully watched," Comrade Yablonsky writes, "the development of the class battles in the different countries during the last year, not only in France, the United States, England, Scandinavia, etc., but in the countries with more revolutionary tension, such as Bulgaria, Czecho-Slovakia and even Poland, must conclude that the 'sudden' (the organised and leading rôle of the Communist Parties has entirely dropped out here from Comrade Yablonsky's analysis) sharp class battles are followed by a certain 'lull' in all these countries, marking a further hidden, sometimes slow, and sometimes speedy polarisation of the class forces."

And further:

"*This spasmodic development of events is necessarily supplemented** by sharp shifts, stormy outbreaks of class struggle, when new, deep layers of revolutionised masses of the working class are 'suddenly' hurled to the top with volcanic force. *A most striking example of this is . . . the Belgian miners' strike.*"

It is precisely this *intermittence* of the revolutionary movement, which is characterised by periods of calm, and which is only *necessarily supplemented* (!) by stormy outbreaks of class struggle" which is supposed to form the characteristic peculiarity of the present "*transitional phase of the class struggle,*" a peculiarity which determines "*the specific objective conditions* for the further growth of the revolutionary upsurge."

Such are the fundamental estimates of the state of the revolutionary movement.

Wherein is their *fundamental fallacy?*

There is no doubt that the comparative importance of spontaneity and "suddenness" in the revolutionary process is still very great, that the difficulties in the matter of mastering the leadership of the spontaneous movement are very great, and that our Parties still lag much behind in this respect. But there is also no doubt that in a whole number of the more responsible sectors of the front, we have a growth, not only of the influence, but also of the organising and leading rôle of our Parties, particularly in recent times. Is it not a fact that our Parties have headed and successfully led big fighting strikes in Poland and Czecho-Slovakia, despite the resistance of the reformists, that our Party in Germany developed an em-

*The italics are ours in all cases unless otherwise stated.—G. and K.

ttered anti-Fascist struggle at the cost of umerous bloody sacrifices, and has drawn into is struggle considerable sections of Social-emocratic and non-party workers, that our small eroic Party in Japan has successfully developed ig anti-war work from the very beginning of the ar against China, that the Red Army in China, eaded by the Communist Party, has repulsed our attacks of the Kuomintang, etc., etc. Even n the Belgian general strike of the miners, which t the beginning had no central leadership, the nitiative of the movement in Borinage was in our ands, and the influence of our small Communist arty is daily growing as never before. All this rops out of Comrade Yablonsky's purview. All his is not reflected in the general characterisation which he gives of the situation of the revolutionary movement in the majority of the capitalist countries (he makes certain reservations, but also nsufficient ones, only for Spain, Germany and China).

Our author not merely overestimates the lement of spontaneity in in the movement. He onsiders the preponderance of spontaneity a aw of the present period. In putting on record he fact, not only the unevenness of development n the individual countries (which has existed in ecent times) but also the intermittent progress within each country, he considers the latter "as precisely indicative for the pre-revolutionary phases." In putting forward this new "law," our author thereby relieves himself of the duty of putting the question before his readers: in which cases did the "intervals" of movement and "calms" arise, not so much from the objective conditions, as from the insufficient activity of our Parties.

And it is in conformity with this worship of spontaneity that our author also formulates the tasks of the Communist Parties. Speaking of the fact of the spontaneous "shoving into" politics and the political movement of new separate strata of workers, as a result of the crisis, and "under the influence of the Communist Parties to a greater or lesser extent," the author raises before the Communist Parties as a front rank task, "*hastening* the political and organisational work of the Communist Party and the drawing of *these masses* into the struggle." The rôle and tasks of the Parties are here clearly narrowed down. Of course, the Parties operate upon the spontaneous revolutionary rise of the widest masses. The task of the Party undoubtedly consists in hastening the revolutionary process (which, of course, does not signify the premature organisation of a rising). But the hastening of the revolutionary process does not amount to the hastening of the drawing of the backward masses into the struggle, it does not merely amount to the bringing up of reserves. It may easily be imagined what a tremendous revolutionary advance would have happened in Germany, if our Party succeeded in setting in motion for the non-parliamentary struggle the 5,300,000 proletarians who voted for it in conditions, exceptionally difficult for the Party and thereby proving that they have already attained a high level of consciousness. The chief task at present is that the Party should take upon itself the initiative of developing struggles and organising them, that it should skilfully put the revolutionary aims before the movement, and that it should come forward in the rôle of the organiser of the revolution which absolutely presupposes, of course, the bringing up of the reserves. It is this problem of the organisation of the revolution, which our author has evaded.

In close connection with the exaggeration of the spontaneous character of the movement and the belittlement of the political influence of the Communist Party, on the masses, the following general characterisation of the present level of the revolutionary movement (while in itself, only general and inadequate) attains a specific meaning.

While recognising that "at the present time antagonistic forces are increasingly coming into motion throughout the world," Comrade Yablonsky at the same time says:

> "But the forces of the revolutionary camp have not yet taken shape, have not *yet* moved into the open field, as it were. The millions of workers and toilers have not yet formed a single organisational and political front under the leadership of the Communist Party, and the class enemy still *maintains the initiative* and even continues his offensive . . . "

In this general characterisation one sees but the stirring of one of the antagonistic forces—those of the bourgeoisie which is prosecuting its further offensive. As for the camp of the revolution, the author sees that these forces have not yet taken shape and the many-millioned masses have not become consolidated in a united front under the leadership of the Communist Party, but he does not see that these forces *are taking shape*, that *the united front of struggle is broadening* under the leadership of the Communist Party. The author sees that the forces of the revolution have not yet come out in the open field, but he does not see that they are beginning to do so and that *the economic struggle is rapidly rising to the level of a political movement against bourgeois dictatorship and Fascism.* The author sees that the bourgeois is continuing the offensive, that it still retains the initiative, but he does not see that the *counter-offensive of the proletariat is*

already growing in a number of the largest capitalist countries. The author does not see that which is *new* in the labour movement, precisely that new feature, without which it would be impossible to speak of the end of capitalist stabilisation.

The characterisation given by Comrade Yablonsky, would be incorrect even for the period which immediately preceded the economic crisis. It would not be out of place to remind Comrade Yablonsky of the following words of Comrade Stalin on Humbert Droz, which were uttered as long ago as 1928, at the very beginning of the revolutionary upsurge of the third post-war period:

> "It follows from the speech of Comrade Humbert Droz, at the meeting of the Political Secretariat, that the struggle of the working class, its spontaneous skirmishes with the capitalists bears, in the main, but a defensive character. . . . Is this correct? No, it is not correct. To declare this, signifies to be dragged at the tail end of events. Comrade Humbert Droz forgets that the struggle of the working class is proceeding now on the basis of *shattering* stabilisation, that the battles of the working class bear not infrequently a character of counter battles, counter-offensives and direct offensives on the capitalists. Comrade Humbert Droz sees nothing new in the battles of the working class for the last period." (Stalin "On the Right Danger in the German Communist Party").

This is what Comrade Stalin said in 1928. But many events have taken place since 1928. Capitalist stabilisation has come to an end. The world is living through a transition to a new round of wars and revolutions. The revolutionary upsurge has marched a considerable distance forward, and has created in a number of the most important capitalist countries (Germany, Poland, etc.) the rapidly maturing conditions pre-requisite for a revolutionary crisis. . . . Is it not clear that Comrade Yablonsky is suffering from "optimism in relation to the forces of the bourgeoisie . . . which at every step is fatally displayed by the pessimists in respect of the revolutionary forces and capabilities of the proletariat"? (Lenin, Vol. XXI, page 38. Russian Edition).

On winning the majority of the Working Class and the Slogan of "the Formation of a Mass Political Army under the Leadership of the Communist Party."

The peculiarity of the article of Comrade Yablonsky, treating of bringing the proletariat to decisive battles, i.e., to the direct struggle for power, is the absence of the slightest reference to the task of winning the majority of the working class. Comrade Yablonsky, puts forward, on the other hand, the task of the "formation of a mass political army under the leadership of the Communist Party."

> "Such is the *present link* of the mass work of the Communist Parties, the *entire task* (!) *of which consists* precisely in forming a mass political army under the leadership of the Communist Party." (The italics are ours.—G. and K.)

Why was it necessary for Comrade Yablonsky to *remove* the slogan of winning the majority of the working class, and replace it by a definition —"the formation of a mass political army," reducing this to the "*entire* task" of the modern "tactical situation"?

Is it not because the task of the formation of mass Communist Parties and strengthening of their mass influence, confronting the revolutionary movement in a number of countries, overshades in the eyes of Comrade Yablonsky the general strategic task—the winning of a majority of the working class, the solution of which we are already closely approaching in some countries, and which is a necessary condition pre-requisite for taking power? Is it not because Comrade Yablonsky has deferred the task of the direct struggle for power to an indefinite far-distant future?

It is well-known, that in the struggle against the opportunist estimate of the October Revolution, Lenin has developed, with exceptional persistency, the proposition that the winning of a majority of the working class (not in the sense of an arithmetical majority, but of the decisive sections of the proletariat) is necessary for the success of winning the dictatorship of the proletariat.

But the formula of Comrade Yablonsky, has no direct connection with the questions of the conquest of power. Our fraternal Communist Parties, being mass Parties in a number of countries, are undoubtedly already now leading a "mass political army." But the essence of the question is that they do not yet lead the majority of the working class.

The winning by them of the majority of the working class in the process of development of the economic and political battles will signify the creation of the necessary prerequisites for the direct and successful struggle for the dictatorship of the proletariat. It is obvious, that it is precisely this idea which is absent, and cannot but be absent in the slogan, "the formation of a mass political army under the leadership of the Communist Party,"

nce its realisation by the Parties, is by means a sufficient condition for a victorious volution.

BRINGING THE MASSES TO DECISIVE BATTLES AND THE TACTICS OF THE UNITED FRONT.

The fundamental problem for the Communist arties at the present time is the task of preparg the working class and exploited masses for e forthcoming decisive revolutionary battles for e dictatorship of the proletariat.

How does Comrade Yablonsky interpret this sk? Speaking of bringing the masses to d preparing for decisive battles, he points out at what is in question is the leading of those asses into battles who are "not yet ready for tive revolutionary movements and have not yet lly recognised the necessity for such action."

And yet it is obvious that in using the formula "the preparation or bringing up of the proleariat to or for the decisive battles," the Bolheviks have always in view the task of preparng, by means of the development of class partial conomic and political battles of the *working class*, or the direct struggle for the dictatorship of he proletariat, looking upon the bringing up of he lagging, revolutionising reserves as but one f the necessary and most important component arts of this preparation.

It would be extremely fallacious to underestimate the whole tremendous significance of the vork of the Communist Party among the still on-revolutionary workers. The entire current olitical situation, pregnant with tremendous lass collisions and imperialist conflicts, requires xceptional energy from the Communist Parties n the matter of most rapid bringing up to the evolutionary vanguard of its lagging reserves, nd demands a *decisive turn of the Party toward he masses*. This is precisely what gives exceptional importance to the organisation of Bolshevist work among the non-Party and "reformst" workers in the factories, the strengthening of vork in the trade unions, the revolutionary trade nion oppositions and the Red trade union organsations, the persistent prosecutions of the tactics f the united front from below, i.e., the organisation of the joint struggle of the Communist, on-Party and "reformist" workers under the eadership of the Communist Party on the basis f concrete demands and slogans. All these, which at first glance would appear to be but drab asks, are the most important links, the strengthening of which will ensure the successful levelopment of the counter-offensive of the proetariat. But it would be no less an error to gnore the *initiating* rôle, on the part of the Communist Party, and those advanced sections of the working class, who are already following its lead in the development of struggles. Without this revolutionary initiative, the solution of the task of bringing up the reserves is also impossible. In the matter of the development and organisation of the economic and political battles, we have still considerable lagging by the Communist Parties. The attention of the Parties must be concentrated upon this. Comrade Yablonsky, however, devotes exceedingly little attention to this question. Of this he only speaks slightly and in passing.

The essence of the question consists precisely in this, that Comrade Yablonsky does not reveal in his article *to a sufficient degree the path and the methods* by which the Communist Parties will lead the masses to the decisive battles, and how the Communist Parties must turn toward the masses. However, let us point out that Comrade Yablonsky does speak about this, but he speaks a great deal and very persistently of some methods and paths, and the others he just slightly mentions. And in this case, "the tone makes the music," as the French say.

How does he make concrete the slogans—"a turn towards the masses" and "bringing up the masses to the revolutionary struggle"? What does he lay stress upon? In the main he lays stress upon three propositions: (1) the need to abolish the trite application of general formula in propaganda and agitation. (2) The need to break down the Chinese wall between the reformist and Communist workers, by mass work in the trade unions, the factories and by changing the character of the propaganda and agitation. And finally, (3) the need for developing the united front from below with the still non-revolutionary masses.

All this is correct. All this is necessary. But is such a concretisation of these slogans enough, or not enough, for the current phase of the revolutionary struggle?

It is quite obvious that it is not enough. The author, it is true, does mention in a few places that "the re-education of the masses" is effected "in the process of the struggle," that the Communist Party must be capable of "utilising" every occasion "for the development of mass movement and mass battles," but of this he speaks in passing, and he lays the chief stress upon the tasks of agitation and propaganda, as though the matter of the organisation of economic battles and political mass strikes is something which has already been entirely mastered by our Parties and is an easy thing, as though the whole situation does not now raise this task to the front rank.

And yet the resolution of the XVIth Congress of the C.P.S.U. (b) on the report of Comrade Molotov, while taking note of the successes, has at the same time raised as one of the fundamental tasks the transition "from the *methods of agitation and propaganda* which predominate in the practice of the Comintern Sections to the methods of *organisation and leadership of the class battles of the proletariat . . .*"

Comrade Thälman recently has similarly indicated the tasks of the German Party on the basis of its experience :

> "And now we come to the fundamental question of the revolutionary work and policy of our own Party,—*the fundamental problem of its Bolshevisation;*— in the past, notwithstanding the big successes and achievements, *we were still incapable of achieving the real transformation of our Party from one of mere agitation and propaganda into a leader of all the movements and battles of the proletariat.* We were still incapable of filling the whole of our policy and work with such revolutionary fighting content." (From the article of Comrade Thälman : "The question of our Strategy and Tactics." June, 1932).

Is it not obvious, that now, when capitalist stabilisation has come to an end, when we are entering upon the second round of wars and revolutions—*the development, organisation and leadership of the battles of the working class* and the exploited masses of the toilers, battles, which form an inseparable part of the general struggle for a revolutionary way out of the crisis,—are now raised to first place in the practical work of the Communist Party? The development of the struggles does not only not set aside, of course, but pre-supposes the strengthening of the ties of the vanguard with the reserves, which are coming up, and itself facilitates this strengthening more than anything else.

The Bolshevist line on the transition from the preponderating agitational and propagandist methods of work to methods of organisation and leadership of the class battles of the proletariat requires, as an indispensable condition of its fulfilment, not only the destruction of the right-wing opportunist drag upon the revolutionary activity of the proletariat as the chief danger, but also the resolute exposure of the "leftist" moods, which try to disguise passivity and abandonment of "dull" work in the trade unions, educational work among the masses, etc., by nothing but talk about the development of revolutionary mass battles.

This is the only connection in which Communists can put the question of the united front from below against capital, Fascism and the treacherours leaders of the Social-Democracy and the reformist unions. The united front from below is the *united front in the struggles,* the basic forms of which are different in the various countries, and depend upon the concrete political situation, the conditions of the revolutionary movement and the degree of maturity of the revolutionary crisis. But regarding the question of extending the united front from below in struggles and the actual struggles in different countries, Yablonsky says nothing.

ON THE SLOGAN OF THE GENERAL STRIKE.

The politically erroneous and right-wing opportunist stand of Comrade Yablonsky, is summed up more sharply than anywhere else in his scornful treatment of the question of the general strike.

> "This (i.e., "the lead to the struggles," "the turn towards the masses," etc., etc.), Comrade Yablonsky writes, "naturally presupposes, of course, a merciless struggle against all the bombastic and trite phrases, such as the talk of a 'general strike' as the only panacea for the further development of the revolutionary battles."

The last part of the passage on the general strike clearly plays, with Comrade Yablonsky, the part of a masque which enables the author, *under cover of fighting against obvious and gross "leftist" lines* ("the general strike as the only panacea") *to declare, in practice, against the mass political strike, in general, as the (at the present time) basic lever for the mobilisation of the masses for the struggle, and their revolutionisation, in the countries in which the prerequisites for a revolutionary crisis are rapidly maturing (Germany and Poland) and where the elements of civil war are growing apace (Germany).*

The whole experience of the struggle in such countries as Poland and Germany is in sharp contradiction to the estimate given by Comrade Yablonsky. He does not understand and ignores the perfectly obvious fact that the whole progress of the revolutionary struggle of the German proletariat against the frontal attack of capital, against the Fascist terror, that the whole situation which has already led to a small civil war in Germany,—*that all this raises as the central task,—the task of leading the masses to a general political strike through the development of partial economic and political battles and battles against the Fascist terror of the National Socialists and the Fascist Government of Von Papen.*

This is precisely why the C.P.G. acted quite correctly when it proclaimed the slogan of the *organisation* of a general strike as an immediate

logan of action in the days of the Fascist coup
a Prussia. Unfortunately the Party was not in
me, or was incapable of adopting all the
easures necessary for translating this slogan
nto action.

We have now in Germany an extremely
eculiar situation, when political battles and a
ass political strike is pushed to the front, above
ll, against the saturnalia of the Fascist terror,
hen the proletariat is drawn, through this
hannel, into the fight against the entire system
f the open Fascist dictatorship, against the
ntire capitalist system in Germany. It cannot
ut be noted that the inadequate development of
conomic battles in Germany, is now the reason
or the still insufficient tempo of preparations
or the organisation of a general political strike.
he experience of the struggle of the revolution-
ry proletariat of Poland (General Strike of
larch 16th, Dombrovo Miners' strike, etc.) has,
n its part, clearly brought to light the ever-
urther shifting of the centre of gravity to ever
igher forms of the class struggle, namely,
olitical battles, the organisation of political
nass strikes and later to a general strike of the
roletariat. Political mass strikes and a general
nass strike and its organisation are becoming, in
number of countries (Germany, Poland) the
nain link in the development of the revolutionary
truggle. The continuing heroic struggle of the
Belgian proletariat provides us with an exceed-
ngly striking example of the rise of a general
trike of miners on an economic basis, supported
y the workers of other industries (metal, etc.)
nd assuming revolutionary forms. The general
miners' strike in Belgium has undoubtedly become
he turning point in the development of the
evolutionary movement of the entire Belgian
roletariat.

The unceasing mass strikes in Spain, in their
urn, tell no less strikingly of the rôle of the
eneral strike in the development of the revolu-
ionary movement.

The example of Germany, Poland, Czecho-Slovakia, Belgium, Spain and other countries, is a forcible manifestation of the fact that the proletariat is resorting more and more to the weapon of the general strike, accompanied by revolutionary demonstration and street battles with the police and *gendarmerie*. This shows that the movement is assuming ever sharper forms. This undoubtedly is an expression of the fact that the *force of the proletariat is growing*. The circumstance that the Social-Democrats are utilising, in certain cases, the slogan of the general strike, as a "left" manœuvre for the disruption of the partial struggles already in progress, cannot be regarded as a more or less comprehensible argument against the Communist slogan of the general strike, and its insistent preparation by the development, both of partial economic struggles for the every-day needs of the working class, and the political movements of the proletariat. The underestimation of the possibilities of the organisation of a general strike has already led in some cases to this; that our organisations found themselves disarmed by the "left" manœuvres of Social-Democracy, who made use of this weapon. And however much Comrade Yablonsky may opportunistically revile the general strike, describing it as a "bombastic and trite phrase," the experience of the world revolutionary movement has again and again confirmed that it is precisely the mass revolutionary strike which is a "specifically proletarian weapon" (Lenin). And there is no doubt that as time goes on, the proletariat will utilise to a greater extent this tried weapon of struggle, striving more and more to raise it to a still higher level and lead it to the path of development into an armed rising of the proletariat.

But this perspective does not, it seems, now stand before the spiritual vision of Comrade Yablonsky, who is turning his face backwards, and on the eve of the forthcoming XIIth Plenum of the E.C.C.I. is trying to drag the Party back from the XIth and Xth.

THE VETERANS' MOVEMENT IN THE U.S.A.

By Williams.

UNDER the spur of the economic crisis, which is unprecedented in the history of American capitalism, both in acuteness and duration, a further sharpening of class contradictions and radicalisation of large masses is going on in America. Under the ruthless blows of the crisis, even the most backward and least active sections of the working class, farmers and city petty bourgeoisie are awakening to political life; destitution, poverty and hunger drive them further and further along the road of economic and political struggle. The movement of the ex-soldiers of the imperialist war constitutes a striking expression of this growing political activity of the widest masses in the United States.

This movement is a mass movement of the unemployed, ruined farmers, discharged office employees, bankrupt small shopkeepers and traders. The movement broke out spontaneously, contrary to the desires of the fascist and reformist organisations of ex-servicemen; it rapidly developed into a mass movement, directed against the bourgeois Government, and clashing directly with all the forces of the State apparatus of the American bourgeoisie.

The veterans' movement which represents, by its social composition, a rather chequered conglomeration, revealed a corresponding diversity of ideological positions, political forms and slogans. Side by side with more advanced revolutionary workers, the movement included also more backward sections of the working class, declassed workers, farmers driven from their land, remnants and fragments of the small-propertied intermediate classes squeezed out by the crisis and driven on to the path of political activity by it; they inevitably brought into this movement their vacillation, their half-heartedness, their petty bourgeois illusions, their reactionary prejudices. Hence, side by side with revolutionary forms of the movement (fights with the police, seizure of trains, organised seizure of vacant Government buildings in Washington) we see in it remnants of bourgeois patriotic ideology, reformist slogans, parliamentary illusions. In their movement directed against the Government the veterans use the phraseology of war patriotism; in their clashes with the police and siege of the central Government they march beneath the American flag, proclaiming themselves patriots, etc. This external diversity and contradiction caused by the heterogeneous social sources of the movement cannot, of course, conceal the *principal* element in it; the *objectively revolutionary character* of this movement, which is directed against the American Government, particularly against the class policy of the American bourgeoisie towards the unemployed; *the mass character* of this movement representing a new expression of the radicalisation of the working class, and the non-proletarian toiling masses.

The American bourgeoisie, although alarmed by this movement, has not changed its class policy in the slightest degree. Although the House of Representatives passed a bill to pay the veterans their bonus—that is, their back pay of one dollar per day of actual service at the front, the Senate rejected this bill. The Government attempted to appease the veterans by petty concessions: a small sum of money was appropriated to feed them, Hoover advanced 100,000 dollars to transport the veterans home, the law permitting some categories of war veterans to receive small treasury loans not exceeding 50 per cent. of the bonus against their bonus was somewhat extended; the interest on these loans was reduced from 4.5 per cent. to 3.5 per cent. However, these mock "concessions" could not satisfy the veterans. The Government's refusal to pay the bonus immediately, instead of in 1945, as promised, was covered by argument that immediate payment of the bonus would result in inflation and threaten the stability of the dollar. This argument was used by a Government which had just assigned, through the Reconstruction Finance Corporation, three billion dollars to the banks, railroads and insurance companies, not hesitating in this case to place the whole financial system of the country under the threat of inflation. Neither the Republican nor the Democratic Party gave even partial support to the veterans' demands, the election platforms of both parties failing even to mention the bonus. All the efforts of the Government and of both parties of the American big bourgeoisie had one aim—to demoralise the movement, to disrupt it from within, to intimidate and drive the veterans out of Washington. To this end were mobilised all the fascist and social-fascist reserves of the American bourgeoisie: the American Legion, Father Cox, a demagogue of the fascist type, Norman Thomas, the leader of the Socialist Party, police agent provocateurs, "benevolent" senators, all of whom aimed at one thing: to keep the movement away from revolutionary action, to separate it from revolutionary leadership, to clear the veterans out of Washington. The capitalist press conducted a frantic campaign against the veterans, refering to their demands as "an attempt to hold-up the treasury." The

o-called liberal organs, such as "The Nation," dvised the veterans that their demands were rong "both actually and in principle ("Nation," ily 27).

A particularly shameful position was taken by he American Socialist Party. This party sought o incite against the veterans the unemployed orkers, carrying on propaganda to the effect hat "the demand for bonus payment is unfair (!) o the unemployed, to the debt-burdened farmers, nd to the whole country." ("New Leader," pril 16.) The Socialist Party refused to sup-ort the demand for the payment of the bonus nd hypocritically advised the veterans that these soldiers would do better to work for eneral relief for the workers than for a special ift for themselves." ("New Leader," June 11.) he tactics of the socialists were clear: to break p the movement of the veterans under the pre-ext of the necessity to fight "in general" in avour of unemployment relief; not to develop nd strengthen this mass movement by connect-ng it up with the unemployed movement, but to demoralise, compromise and disrupt it. How many strikes have the socialists broken with the d of this manoeuvre, namely, to break a strike, hich has already begun, under the pretext that he socialist leaders think and even talk of a ore "general," of a bigger strike. Norman homas, the socialist leader, who made a special rip to Washington in order to misguide the eterans, upon returning from his journey, ex-ressed his delight that the veterans do not beg n the streets of Washington and that "there was o sign of drunkenness or any other disorder" mong them and praised for it—the Washington olice. "It is fair to say that some credit goes o the Washington Police Department," wrote his socialist leader in the central organ of the Socialist Party, "for the good sense it has so ar shown in getting along with these men." "New Leader," June 25.) This was a month rior to the brutal attack of the police and troops, who poisoned "these men" with their wives and hildren with asphyxiating gases, who bayoneted hem out of their tents and huts, and burned down their camp.

The socialists were followed by the American Trotskyists. In their sheet, "The Militant," hey, too, branded the demand of the war veterans or payment of the bonus as an "equivocal demand"; they, too, treated the veterans' move-nent with supercilious condescension, refusing to upport its concrete demands, or recognise its pecific mass character. Like the socialists, the American Trotskyists sought to cover up their reacherous menshevist refusal to arouse the masses for the struggle against the Government, and support them in this struggle by talk of supporting the unemployed movement "in general" rather than that of the veterans.

Despite all the social-fascist propaganda, despite all the promises, exhortations, petty concessions, and direct threats on the part of the Government, the veterans remained in Washington, stubbornly demanding their bonus. Gradually the composition of their ranks began to change and with this, also the forms of their movement, its slogans and demands. A section of the veterans yielded to the promises and exhortations of the Government and its agents; the more or less well-to-do elements, those who had at least an illusion of finding some means of livelihood at home began to leave Washington. The more proletarianised elements, who had nothing to lose, who had neither means of livelihood nor any hope of any, remained in Washington. Gradually the veterans began to pass from demonstrations in front of the Senate to actions such as the seizure of the vacant Government buildings, into which the veterans began to move in an organised manner, the picketing of the rich restaurants, etc. The systematic propaganda of the revolutionary Workers Ex-Servicemen's League began to find its way through the mountains of provocative lies of the bourgeoisie, its press, its police, its fascist and social-fascist agents. The veterans, without discontinuing their struggle (as the socialists urged them to do), began to advance demands for social insurance for all the workers, thus connecting up their movement with that of the unemployed and looking to the latter for support of their economic demands. From day to day the Government agents-provocateurs, and the social-fascist agents, dinned into the ears of the veterans that the Communists are enemies of their movement, that the "Reds" merely want to utilise the veterans for their vicious political aims. Yet the simple truth that the Communist Party was the *only* party supporting the veterans' demands, conducting agitation, propaganda and organisational work to extend and deepen the movement, this simple truth outweighed mountains of oral and printed capitalist lies. "The Daily Worker" of July 19 quoted a very characteristic statement of a rank-and-file veteran of Oklahoma who had probably been propagandised (not without results) to believe that the "Reds" are his enemies. "I hate the Reds," he said, "but, you know, I'd like to see a Bolshevik government in this country." Another veteran from Kentucky, when a military patrol snatched the leaflets of the Workers' Ex-Servicemen's League from him, and tore them up, went to his comrades with the

complaint: "Some of them damn Reds tore my leaflets up."

Simultaneously with the penetration of the minds, even of the most backward veterans, by the elementary revolutionary truths, even if in a fantastic form, the rank-and-file veterans began to separate themselves from their bourgeois reformist commanders. The veterans began to grow disappointed with the policy of top negotiations with the Government and police officials, with influential Congressmen and Senators, a policy pursued by the Waterses and Robertsons, with a view to restraining the veterans from mass revolutionary actions The demand put forward by the Workers' Ex-Servicemen's League and widely propagandised by the Communist Party for the selection of rank and file committees from below gained extensive popularity. The "Daily Worker" of July 19 described the situation in Washington as follows: " 'Rank-and-File.' You see these magic words painted all over the shacks which the vets call their billets. 'Rank-and-file' —the phrase caught on like wildfire."

The Workers' Ex-Servicemen's League succeeded in having a number of delegations get rid of their self-appointed "commanders" and elect rank-and-file committees in their place. The League also succeeded in calling a small conference of rank-and-file veterans, attended, according to the "Daily Worker," by about 300 delegates. The movement against the bourgeois leaders grew, and among the veterans who at the beginning came out only as loyal patriots began to be heard revolutionary slogans and the singing of revolutionary songs of the working class. The demonstrations of the veterans before the Capitol became more stubborn, persistent and threatening.

The Government hesitated fo. a g time; Hoover, who wavered between e equivocal demand of the capitalists . smas. . ovement, and the fear to lose h popula efore the elections, now issued al orde to call out marines against the vete.ans, now cancelled them when requested to give the order in writing; on July 21 he ordered the veterans through the Chief of the Washington Police to clear out of Washington by August 4, and then, without waiting for this date, he, on July 29, called out the 16th brigade consisting of 2,000 infantrymen and 800 cavalrymen with tanks, machine-guns and gas bombs and with the senseless brutality characteristic of all cowards, he had the hungry, ragged ex-servicemen of the American army gassed, bayonetted and fired upon,—their huts, tents and belongings burned. The American bourgeoisie revealed its true class face on July 29 when it gave battle to the hungry masses for the right of a handful of banks and trusts to rob the country and the treasury, to appropriate the billions in subsidies which are squeezed out of the masses in taxes.

The significance of the military programme of the veterans in Washington cannot be over-estimated. The American Government brutally and cynically displayed its ravenous class character; its fascist and semi-fascist agents are now clearly seen in their rôle of preparers and instigators of the Washington shooting. In the asphyxiating gases by which the veterans were poisoned, in the flames of the burning camps, the demagogic election phrases of the Republican, Democratic, and Socialist parties about the "great American democracy" curled up and burned out; the faith in the bourgeois "fatherland" for which veterans fought and died in 1917-18 was bayonetted in the streets of Washington. These lessons of Washington will undoubtedly be understood by those thousand of veterans who came to Washington from the remotest corners of the country, and who will now spread the bitter political lessons of the Washington class progrom throughout the land.

These lessons of the former soldiers and defenders of the country, will also reach the serving soldiers of the American Army and Navy. The veterans' movement not only represents a new degree in the intensification of the class contradictions in America, a new indication of the deep radicalisation of the masses; its lessons will have a far-reaching effect upon the revolutionary awakening of the American toiling masses.

* * *

The Communist Party of the United States was the only party which supported the demands of the veterans, which organised their movement, which sought to link up this mass movement with the struggle of the American workers, particularly of the unemployed, and to raise this movement to a higher political level. The Communists working in the revolutionary Workers' Ex-Servicemen's League in general correctly understood their task, and from the beginning, formulated the veterans' demands, seeking to unite the entire movement around these demands. The programme of the League contained demands for the immediate payment of the bonus, an increase of pensions to the war invalids, against Jim Crowing the Negro veterans, unity with the working class in the struggle against the capitalists, and the slogan of a struggle against the new imperialist war. The Party conducted an energetic campaign during the veterans' march on Washington and during their stay there, thereby showing in deeds that the Communist Party is the only defender and leader of the

veterans in their struggle for their partial demands. No less energetic was the campaign of the Communist Party against the self-appointed leadership of the movement; the Party's demand for election of rank and file committees was put forward correctly and promptly and to a considerable degree contributed to the rallying of the rank and file veterans around the revolutionary demands of the Workers' Ex-Servicemen's League.

Nevertheless, even at the beginning of the war veterans' movement the Party displayed certain hesitation and vacillation on the question of the approach to this movement. Instead of developing this spontaneous movement and drawing into it ever new and new strata of ex-servicemen, the Party organs underestimated the growing movement and considered that the mass march of the veterans upon Washington could be replaced by the sending of delegations.

When the veterans' movement developed into a mass march the Party correctly came out in support of their demands, but even here the Party organs did not correctly estimate the character of this movement and did not come out in support of the movement as a whole in time. The "Daily Worker" at first tended to approach only the advanced section of the veterans' movement, the working-class veterans. The veterans' movement was declared in the pages of the "Daily Worker" to be a movement of the working class ("Daily Worker" of June 10), and even the movement of "the decisive sections of the working class" ("Daily Worker," June 8 and 13); later the veterans were declared to be "merely the shock troop of the unemployed millions" ("Daily Worker" of July 5). The central organ of the Party addressed itself systematically only to the *worker*-veterans (see editorials of the "Daily Worker" of June 6, June 8, June 10, June 13), directing its appeals and formulating its slogans only to the *worker*-veterans. The central organ of the party thus lacked clarity on the question of the necessity to connect the Party with the movement as a whole, to utilise it for strengthening the influence of the Communist Party over such sections of the working class and non-proletarian toiling masses, as had not yet been touched by the propaganda and agitation of the Communist Party.

Incorrectly estimating the movement as a whole, and hesitating to give it its full support, the "Daily Worker" did not always clearly raise the question of winning this movement politically. For instance, the "Daily Worker" of June 6 editorially developed at some length the conception that the Communist Party is only the "*best friend*" of the veterans' movement, without raising the question of the necessity for the Party to become the organiser and political leader of the movement. Instead of putting forward the task of active political leadership of the movement, a half-hearted, passive attitude of "friendship" and sympathy with the movement was developed.

While correctly carrying on a campaign against the self-appointed bourgeois-reformist leadership of the movement, the Communist Party sometimes tried in practice to pursue the same line as was erroneously embodied in the "Daily Worker" articles noted above. The Party made decisions that the Communists working among the veterans must "draw a sharp class differentiation inside the camp." Here is again revealed the same hesitancy on the question of the winning of this mass movement as a whole, on the question of leading its objectively revolutionary struggle, and expressing its demands directed against the bourgeoisie.

In his article "Discussion on Self-Determination Summed Up" Lenin wrote in 1915:

"The socialist revolution in Europe cannot be anything else than an outburst of mass struggle on the part of all and sundry of the oppressed and discontented. Sections of the petty bourgeoisie and of the backward workers will inevitably participate in it—without such participation *mass* struggle is *impossible*, without it *no* revolution is possible—and just as inevitably will they bring into the movement their prejudices, their reactionary fantasies, their weaknesses and errors. But *objectively*, they will attack *capitalism*, and the class-conscious vanguard of the revolution, the advanced proletariat expressing this objective truth of a heterogeneous and discordant, motley and outwardly incohesive mass struggle, will be able to unify and direct it" . . . for the overthrow of the bourgeoisie.

Subsequently the "Daily Worker" corrected its estimation of the veterans' movement in the spirit of Lenin's strategical directives quoted above. The "Daily Worker" editorial of July 12 contains a correct appraisal of this movement and correctly outlines the task of the Party in the veterans' movement. It may be noted, however, that this article, too, did not sufficiently stress the mass character of the movement, and the task of linking up the veterans' struggle with the fight for unemployment insurance and against the danger of imperialist war, while correctly raised, were not raised concretely and propagated.

At the present time the task of the Party in the veterans' movement consists of energetically continuing to support this mass movement as a whole, and its immediate demands which are directed against the Government and the bourgeoisie. While explaining in the broadest

possible way to the masses the lessons of the Washington pogrom of July 29, the Party must expose the class policy of the Government, of the Republican, Democratic, and Socialist parties, must show by the example of the Washington shooting, the futility of the reformist methods of struggle and the collapse of the parliamentary and patriotic illusions which are supported by the bourgeois leaders of the movement. The Communist Party must also widely utilise the Washington attack on the ex-soldiers of the imperialist war for the anti-war campaign of the Party, demonstrating by this example the imperialist class character of every war waged by the bourgeois state and explaining to the soldiers and sailors the true attitude of the bourgeois fatherland, which they are called upon to defend, to them.

The task of the Party consists of continuing to link up concretely the demand of the veterans for the bonus with the demand for social insurance. The Party must organise meetings and demonstrations of the trade unions, unemployed committees and other mass organisations to support the veterans' demands, organised joint demonstrations of veterans and unemployed workers, etc. A special task of the Party consists in utilising the Washington lessons for the work among the Negroes, stressing the united struggle of the white and Negro veterans in Washington under the leadership of the Communists, including the Negro leaders of the American Communist Party. The veterans' demand for the payment of the bonus must be made into an important demand of its election platform by the Communist Party. The Communists working in the Workers' Ex-Servicemen's League must continue their energetic work of recruiting veterans into the League, seeking at the same time to broaden the organisational basis of the League, transforming it from a League of *workers*-veterans into a mass fighting organisation of all ex-servicemen connected with the international organisation of ex-servicemen (I.A.C.). At the present time, the Party must do everything possible to utilise the return of the veterans for propaganda throughout the country, building permanent committees of veterans in the different cities and States with a national centre of the movement. Finally, the Party must utilise the political lessons of the Washington march of the veterans for the organisation of a united powerful hunger march of the unemployed workers and former soldiers upon Washington at the end of this year. This task has already been set by the Party; the lessons of the Washington events will help the party transform this march into a powerful movement of the broadest masses under the leadership of the working class.

PARTY STRUCTURE EXPERIENCE

"Partiearbeiter," August, 1932.

THE August issue of "Parteiarbeiter," the organ of the organisation department of the Central Committee of the C.P.G., is devoted to the work of the party in the trade unions. In an editorial, dealing with this question, the organisation department of the C.C. of the C.P. of Germany begins with the question: Why was there no general strike on July 20?

The reply to this question is as follows:—

"Because we have not yet appreciated the necessity of consolidation in the factories and trade unions," because "the decision in favour of a determined turn in this direction, adopted by the Party and by the revolutionary Trade Union Opposition last January, is being carried out very unsatisfactorily."

In proof of this contention, the editorial refers to reports delivered by Berlin worker correspondents at the enlarged meeting of the Editorial Board of the "Rote Fahne." A comrade from the Siemens-Werner factory stated that he, together with the other factory activists, vainly awaited a call to action.

Another comrade from the General Electric Co. (Brunnenstrasse) reported that general sentiments in the factory were definitely in favour of the Communists, and, that had a strike been called, everybody would have responded to it, including the national-socialists. The movement, in the opinion of this comrade, was disrupted by two reformist factory committee members, who refused to do anything without instructions from their leaders.

A comrade from the Osram factory stated:

"The majority of the workers no longer trusts any party. The same applies to the Communists about whom the workers say: 'They babble but do nothing.' "

The conclusion drawn by the comrade was that the Communists must provide a personal example, even at the price of costly sacrifices, to capture the confidence of the workers.

A comrade from the General Electric Co. transformer factory, stated that "July 20 and 21 showed that we are a party of agitation rather than of organisation."

A similar picture is drawn by comrade Fritz in an article published in "Pravda." Comrade Fritz declares that on July 20, the workers' quarters of Berlin were free from police throughout the day. Towards the evening there began the first scattered, spontaneous labour demonstrations.

The editorial draws the following conclusion:

"Only by a rejection (in practice) of the opposition work in the reformist trade unions, is it possible to explain why the social-democrats and the A.D.G.B. succeeded in so easily keeping the masses out of the struggle, by appealing to the demands of trade union discipline."

It must be said that this conclusion is somewhat surprising.

The practical failure to carry on work in the reformist trade unions, inevitably had to have a very serious adverse effect. But the example cited in the editorial itself, as well as comrade Fritz's article, show something entirely different, namely that the workers were prepared for a fight, but had no leadership, that, in some factories, the workers are beginning to regard the Communists as prattlers, who only talk of a revolutionary struggle.

The editorial of the "Party Worker" proposes a reorganisation of the methods of party work. This reorganisation is conceived by the organisation department of the C.C. of the C.P. of Germany as follows:

"The daily problems of the workers—the wage questions, the special problems of the various big factories, the situation at the labour exchanges, the present reduction of the dole, the question of pensions, rent, social policy, high cost of living, etc.—all of these questions must be concretely discussed in the party committees, and concrete decisions must be adopted, on the organisation of the struggle at the decisive points."

This proposal definitely fails to provide an answer to the questions raised by the worker correspondents. The worker correspondents, reflecting the sentiments of the masses, raise the question of changing from agitation to organisation and action, while the editorial signed by the Organisation Department of the C.C. speaks of discussion and passing of decisions.

The worker correspondents raise the question point blank: Where was the Berlin district leadership on July 20th? *What did it do to take advantage of the dismay displayed by the Government, to lead the masses into the streets during the day, and organise a political strike first in the factories in which our influence is strong, so as to broaden the movement in the evening when the factories close?* At the present time Germany is passing through a very critical moment. The proletariat and its Communist vanguard must carefully see to it that they do not miss the opportunity for launching a counter-attack, remembering how severely and mercilessly the programme of the Comintern condemns the Communist Parties, which lag behind the revolutionary movements.

On the basis of what the worker correspondents (to whom the editorial refers) say, our German comrades must revise the forms and methods of party work, primarily from this point of view.

It goes without saying that it is impossible to prepare and develop a struggle without a thorough knowledge of all the concrete conditions of the situation, without a careful analysis of the sentiments of each section of the workers (Communists, social-democrats, truly revolutionary trade unions, unorganised, youths, women workers, foreigners, etc.), without the ability to issue such slogans as are capable of inspiring the decisive masses, without a preliminary persistent educational and organisational work, in forms most corresponding to the approach required by each section of the proletariat. But, at the same time, another question must also be raised, the question of the attraction to the struggle, and the concrete forms of such attraction. The party committee must not only decide upon launching preparations for a struggle; it must lead the entire work in this direction, the party committee must help each cell by advice, by outside forces, it must help them to reorganise themselves in case of necessity, to change the methods of approach and the slogans; in case of failure of some attempts the party committee must decide, with a view to the whole situation, whether it is necessary to discontinue any further preparations, or whether it is necessary to continue to fulfil the tasks decided upon, with added energy, with new forces, despite all sacrifices.

The general situation, particularly in Germany, now raises the problem of concrete day-to-day leadership before the Communist parties with unusual acuteness. Day-to-day leadership means: (1) ability to concentrate the party forces at such sections of the class struggle where it is of greater importance at any given moment, and at the same time more easy to attract to the struggle the broad masses of the proletariat and the toiling masses of the city and village sympathising with the proletariat; (2) systematic control of the fulfilment of the plan of development of mass

revolutionary actions; (3) systematic rectification of existing defects and errors made, for which purpose the forms and methods of party work should be constantly adapted to the current needs and the party members and sympathisers regrouped.

This requires strong local and district party committees, strongly connected with the cells and fractions in the mass organisations, and capable, when necessary, of taking independent action, without awaiting instructions from the higher party centres.

This also requires strong and efficient illegal factory cells closely connected, by *conspirative methods*, with the respective party committees, and linked up with the masses through different legal and semi-legal factory and non-factory organisation, such as the trade unions, the sports clubs, etc.

This also requires strong fractions in all mass legal and semi-legal organisations, closely connected (also by conspirative methods) with the respective party committees, and ensuring the latter an opportunity to utilise the existing legal and semi-legal organisations as transmission belts, connecting them with the masses.

Finally this requires a good legal and illegal central, regional, local and (necessarily) factory periodic and non-periodic party press, capable of popularly discussing the problems of the struggle and self-criticism, operating upon a system of worker correspondents and groups, for the distribution of the paper and collection of funds, for its further development and consolidation.

We repeat our proposal (see "C.I." No 13) that the "Party Worker" should, in its turn, systematically and critically elucidate the entire available experience of party structure, discussing from issue to issue the problems of the most important sections of the class struggle, particularly of the biggest factories.

Finally, any explanation of the causes of the failure of the movement of July 20 would be incomplete without a discussion of the question of the leading cadres.

A new turning-point is to be observed in the world labour movement, primarily in countries such as Germany, which constitutes one of the weakest links of the capitalist system: a turn towards decisive battles for power. This turn requires new men. They grow, these new cadres of the labour vanguard. They grow in every country, primarily in the ranks of the Communist Party, but also outside the Communist Party, displaying their abilities as organisers and leaders during recent strikes and revolutionary demonstrations.

These cadres develop out of the best activists of the Communist Party, out of the ranks of the working youth, out of the old workers of the workers' organisations, including members of the Social-Democratic Party and reformist trade unions, who resolutely break with the Social-Democracy. It is necessary to more boldly attract these new cadres to active work of leadership and to organise serious educational activities among them. At the same time, some of the party workers prove to be poorly adapted to the existing situation (and will more so), and their continued control of positions of leadership must only retard the further development of the Communist Party.

Already at the end of 1929, at a meeting of the American Commission of the Presidium of the E.C.C.I., Comrade Stalin said on this question:

> "It is necessary to strengthen the struggle for forging truly revolutionary party cadres and for selecting truly revolutionary leaders in the party, people capable of marching to battle and leading the proletariat with them, people who will not be daunted by any storm, and will not be panic-stricken, but will defy the storm. But in order to fulfil these tasks it is necessary, without losing a single moment, for time does not wait, to take up the purging of the Communist parties of the right and conciliationist elements . . . And this cleansing must be done, not in the ordinary tempo but in an accelerated tempo, for, I repeat, time does not wait and we cannot allow the events to catch us unawares."

The C.P.G., following instructions from the Comintern, carried out a great deal of work in purging its ranks of the right and "left" opportunist elements, but the process of regrouping of the leading cadres in connection with the preparation for decisive battles can certainly not be considered as completed. For this reason Comrade Stalin's suggestions still remain in full force, as affecting the C.P.G. However, the C.P.G. must take into consideration the available experience in this direction, and, while purging its ranks of the right and "left" opportunists and conciliationists, must conduct a determined struggle against a mechanical regrouping of the party cadres. In the past, there have been cases in the activity of some local organisations of the C.P.G., when activists feared to come forward with their proposals, in order not to be charged with some deviation. Any error committed by a party worker inevitably constitutes a deviation from the correct line, but the party organisations must strictly differentiate between accidental mistakes committed by party workers, owing to insufficient preparation, the extreme complexity of the situation, etc., mistakes upon which their authors do

not insist but which they themselves actively help to eliminate, and stable opportunist tendencies, cases of unwillingness and inability to rectify opportunist mistakes committed. In the first case what is required is speedy assistance to correct the mistake, in the second, just as speedy a removal of the useless leadership.

In the present German situation the right opportunist deviations are the most dangerous, the fear of mass work, the distrust in the forces of the working class, the exaggeration of the objective difficulties and of the forces of the class enemies, etc. The "leftists" are also highly dangerous. Especially dangerous are the tendencies, correctly noted in the editorial, towards virtual refusal to work in the reformist trade unions and generally attract reformist workers and Social-Democrats into revolutionary struggle. In addition, it is necessary to remember that if it is true that the right and "left" deviations grow out of the same source, it is always necessary in the present conditions in Germany to expect the right deviation to develop into a "left" sally, and vice versa, and this requires special vigilance on the part of the party leadership and the determination of the concrete direction of the blow in each concrete case.

Comrade Piatnitzky, in one of his recent articles, pointed out, for instance, that as regards the red factory committees in Germany, the main danger to-day is right opportunism, while as regards the work in the reformist trade unions the main dangers are the "left" "theories" to the effect that the reformist trade unions must be destroyed, that the members of the reformist trade unions represent a completely reactionary mass, etc.

What criterion must be applied to determine whether an opportunist error is accidental or fundamental? Of course, there is no infallible measure for it. In each concrete case the respective party body must decide.

Collective work of the party committees, and systematic self-criticism from below, regardless of personalities, remain the basic methods of checking up and combatting deviations.

Otherwise, we fully agree with the editorial of the August issue of the "Party Worker" and believe that this editorial, coupled with the resolution of the R.I.L.U. on the work in factories and the resolution of the Presidium of the E.C.C.I. on the work of the trade union fractions, as well as the extract from the "Infantile Sickness"* on the work in the reactionary unions, all of which are also published in this issue, will serve as helpful material to the party activists.

*"Left Wing Communism."—Lenin.

BOURGEOIS "REVELATIONS" ON THE WAR OF THE FUTURE

By Rol

"Wie würde ein neuer Krieg aussehen," Berlin, 1932.

THE second series of imperialist wars is approaching by leaps and bounds. The capitalists are making feverish preparations for a new war along the lines of the development of the war industry, the adaptation of the so-called peace industries to the requirements of army supply, the preparation for the mobilisation of the entire Governmental machinery, and, most important of all, the political preparation of the masses.

The press, church, school, in a word, the entire arsenal of bourgeois influences over the masses is frenziedly working for the creation of a proper psychological atmosphere for the coming war. The chauvinist, patriotic propaganda on the one hand, and the pacifist mollycoddling on the other are designed to help involve the average citizen in a new war.

The vast production of books (both chauvinist and pacifist) in every capitalist country represents an indication of the energy which the bourgeoisie is devoting to its "ideological" preparation for the new war.

A sufficiently striking exponent of this kind of literature, which combines scientific military talk of the new war, with a sugar-coated pacifist doping of the masses is the symposium: "What a New War Would Look Like," published by the "International Parliamentary Union" on the eve of the Geneva Disarmament Conference.

This symposium represents a peculiar encyclopædic and eclectic mixture of articles by generals (Fuller, von Metsch, Recken), journalists-politicians (Delaisi, Norman Angell, Nicola Politis), and celebrated professors (André Meyer, Johannsen), who attempt to describe the character of a new war.

The symposium discusses a great variety of questions connected with the problem of war in the near future. The generals and professors, the politicians and economists, attempt to show not only the purely military side of the coming slaughter of the nations, but also how it will affect the peaceful population, the so-called rear of the belligerent States.

In the preface to the symposium the Danish Minister of Foreign Affairs, Munk, attempts to convince the reader that the publication of this symposium constitutes a certain tribute to the altar of disarmament. In reality, the symposium represents one of the ideological methods of the preparation for a new war. The mere enumeration of the authors testifies sufficiently that if the Fullers and von Metsches, the Politises and others begin to engage in questions of disarmament; the proper thing to expect is—a new war in the near future.

The fundamental object of the book under review consists, on the one hand, in a "scientific" substantiation of the character of the future war, and on the other, in the propaganda of the inevitability of a new war with all of its "horrors." The authors of the symposium, fulfilling the social order of the bourgeoisie, attempt to convince the masses that a new war is not only inevitable, but that all of its horrors are inevitable, too, that there is no force in existence capable of preventing the outbreak of a new imperialist war.

For the symposium, especially that part of it which deals with the effect of war upon the peaceful population, abounds in the most minute description of those dreadful prospects which a fresh imperialist war offers the civil populaiton. Gertrude Walker in particular, in her article on "Chemical and Bacteriological Warfare," adduces a good many "striking" proofs of the influence of the new war upon the situation of the rear. Thus, she quotes the Harvard Professor Cannon, one of the experts of the League of Nations Disarmament Commission, who declares that:

"We have not yet seen anything comparable to the destruction of the industrial centres, and wholesale extermination of the civilian population that will take place in the future war."

Another no less informed expert, Lieutenant-General Altroch, believes that "the next war will be more of a wholesale annihilation of the civilian population than a fight between armies."

The bourgeois pacifists attempt to make it appear that they are earnestly engaged in seeking means and measures capable of saving the peaceful population from air attacks of enemy airplanes, from poisonous gases, from bacteriological warfare, etc. The learned experts figure out the thickness and depth of the concrete by which the roofs of buildings must be covered in order to safeguard them against the destructive effect of an aerial bombardment. General Hefton, in his article, points out that the explosion of a 500-1,000 kg. bomb is capable of destroying a

ouse, even as a result of the detonation of the djacent explosion alone. A 100-200 kg. fougasse) bomb is capable of destroying a many-toried building, while a 50 kg. bomb is capable f badly damaging a building.

Prof. Meyer believes that only an underground ellar covered with 13 metres of earth may be egarded as a safe refuge from a 500 kg. bomb. n case of a bombardment of 1,000 kg. bombs he cover must be equal to 24 metres of earth or metres of concrete. In short, it is necessary, nstead of the construction of houses, to build ortresses in the cities. However, one of the League of Nations experts on chemical warfare, Prof. Angelo, declares: "Experience has shown hat no fortress, no armour is capable of resisting he action of modern explosives. In the past eople were able to find a refuge in basements, ellars, and underground shelters. In the future, eadly gases will penetrate any building."

Thus, the horrors of the new war are indescrib-ble and, what is more, insuperable. Neither ortresses, armour nor the latest achievements of echnique are capable of interfering with the new var. Prof. Meyer, in concluding his article, raws very emphatic deductions. He writes:

> "There can be no doubt that European civilisation is a very fragile thing. It may disappear. It is very important that women and men in Europe should know that there are already in existence to-day and to-morrow sufficient means of destruction to shake Europe and perhaps destroy it. Neither science nor technique, of which we are so proud, is capable of removing this danger. On the contrary, with each passing day they furnish even more powerful means of destruction."

In this way do the bourgeois pacifists seek to nspire the masses with the belief of the impossi-ility of combatting the new war which must be egarded as much of an elemental calamity as n earthquake, a flood, etc. And for quite under-tandable reasons the bourgeois pacifists in enerals' uniforms carefully evade the question, he basic question, of the revolutionary activity of the masses. The authors of the symposium discuss a great variety of questions, down to the effect of war upon the sexual condition of the population, but are careful not to mention the one "horror" which they fear most as a result of the new war, namely, *the conversion of the imperialist war into a civil war.* Only a single article of a bourgeois professor who escaped from the Soviet Union mentions the fact that the important thing is not a new imperialist war, but a civil war which may forestall the imperialist war.

It is noteworthy that the belief of the bourgeois pacifists in the impossibility of preventing the new war, in the necessity of hoping only for "human reason," hoping that the further development of the war technique will make a new war impossible, is essentially shared by the Social-Fascists as well. The Vienna "Arbeiterzeitung," the central organ of the Austro-Marxists, reviewing the symposium: "What the New War Would Look Like," describes all the "horrors" of the new war as depicted in this volume in the greatest detail, limiting itself in conclusion to the "sagacious" sentence that "humanity must know that this reality which will destroy civilisation may develop suddenly, overnight."

The bourgeoisie is preparing a new war. The bourgeois pacifists, the Social-Fascists help in this by different means and methods, especially if it is a case of preparations for a military intervention against the Soviet Union. The vast literature devoted to the new war and published by the capitalist "Agitation and Propaganda Departments" has the object of preparing the masses for a new war, of poisoning their minds and making them into allies of the interventionist plans of the bourgeoisie. Our Communist Parties are obliged to watch most carefully the military and military-political literature published by the bourgeoisie and to expose its true political sense in due time. The struggle against the pacifist deceit of the masses carried out by the bourgeoisie under the most varied disguises constitutes a highly important component part of the anti-war work of the Communist Parties.

NOTE.—Owing to unfortunate printers' error, this article was inadvertently included in contents list of last issue.

Programme of the Communist International (Reprint) 6D.

The Attitude of the Proletariat to War 6D.

The Agent Provocateur in the Labour Movement 6D.

Japan in Manchuria 4D.

Religion in the U.S.S.R. 6D.

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Behind the Scenes at the Disarmament Conference

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